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NIRVANA

A STUDY IN SYNTHETIC CONSCIOUSNESS

BY

GEORGE S. ARUNDALE

(Second Edition, Revised and Enlarged, together with a new Chapter)

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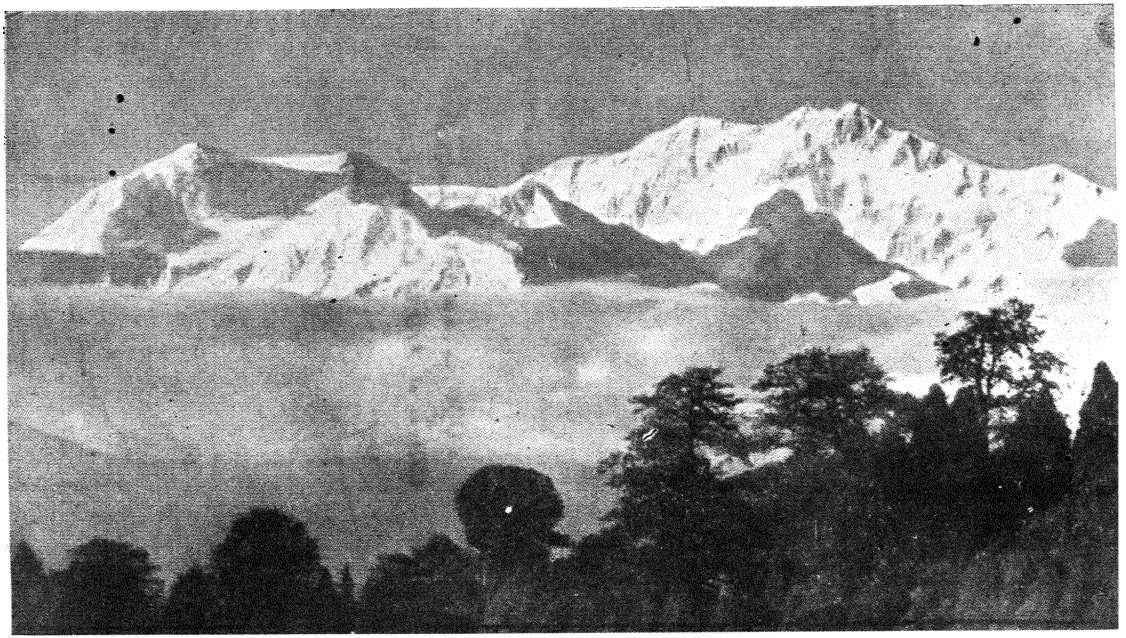

The Himalayas

First published, December, 1926
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TO

TWO ELDER BRETHREN

ANNIE BESANT

CHARLES WEBSTER LEADBEATER

BY WHOSE AID

THESE EXPERIENCES WERE POSSIBLE

AND TO THOSE

IN WHOM NIRVANA SHINES REVEALED

FOREWORD

I HAVE been asked by my life-long friend Bishop Arundale to write a few words of introduction to his book. I consider it a very remarkable production—a valiant attempt to describe the indescribable. Few among men still living on earth are they who have experienced Nirvana; fewer still have made any endeavour to record their impressions. Those of us who have touched that truly tremendous altitude know well that all human words fall short in the effort, that all earthly colours are hopelessly inadequate, to depict its supernal glories; yet must we try, even though we are foredoomed to failure. That which is given to us we must share with our brethren, so far as may be, for that is the law of the occult life; in obedience to that law this book is written. I have myself tried to convey in words something of that supercelestial atmosphere, as you may read in *The Masters and the Path*, but I think my brother Bishop has been more successful than I. There is a living fire in his words. True, that which he has seen cannot be portrayed; yet the enthusiasm which he throws

into the essay is so infectious that we feel ourselves on the very verge of understanding. Much of upliftment, much of help he certainly can and does give us; if we cannot yet know all, at least we are nearer to the knowing, at least we are encouraged by the testimony of one who already knows. And where he stands now, all will stand one day.

So let us unite in outpouring our heartfelt gratitude for this rare book which he has given us; and the best way in which we can show it is to aid him and to follow him in the splendid work which he is doing in the service of our Holy Masters.

C. W. LEADBEATER

My son George has asked me to add a few words to the above, written by one who knows. To try to describe Nirvana is as hopeless a task as to try to empty the ocean into a thimble. Yet it is one of the efforts that are made by heroes only. I recall the words spoken by one who greatly dared in this lower world, as marking the heroic enthusiast:

> It is better to climb nobly and to fail,
> Than ignobly not to climb at all.

ANNIE BESANT

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

I THINK I may say I have been a rathe strenuous person for many years, for over twenty-five years now, under the inspiring guidance of my revered Chief, Dr. Annie Besant; and my strenuousness has been very much on the physical plane. I confess to having thought little of what people call "higher things," of causes and of origins, of theories of life, of planes of nature, of hierarchies of beings, and so forth. I have had work to do in the outer world, and I have tried to do it, and have not concerned myself with whys and wherefores. Whenever I have studied, I have studied specifically to the immediate ends of a particular piece of work. I have never studied for study's sake. I have never cared for wisdom for what wisdom is, but for what wisdom can do. My universe is full of the things I need. If I could not relate a thing to my work, then that thing has been out of my perspective, at all events for the

time being. I have been one-pointed, even though I may have turned my eyes from much upon which they might usefully have rested.

But during the last year or so I have been making a discovery. I have discovered that however much I may have been strenuous on the physical plane, this physical plane strenuousness has been almost as nothing compared with my strenuousness on other planes. This is probably the case with everybody, but it came as a great surprise to me on the physical plane. I began at once to realize that I must cease to live in these plane-tight compartments. I must begin to live on many planes simultaneously. I began to realize that the one life unites all planes and all things; and that in reality there is nothing which should be indifferent to me. Everything is related to everything else, and everything modifies everything else. Why, the far-distant Sun Himself presses physically upon every part of the world, as science itself teaches us.

So I brooded much upon this unity, both in and out of the body, and tried to live more from the universal than from the particular. The result has been, I hope, bigger living, more effective living. But I had no clear perception

of unity, only a sense of it, a vague idea of it just sufficient to make life strangely and intriguingly different.

Many years ago, it was in 1912 at Taormina, Sicily, I had my first glimpse of the fundamental unities. I remember sitting at the window of my room in the hotel in which a party of us were staying, and I was listlessly dreaming. All of a sudden my half non-seeing eyes rested on the orange grove in the little valley beneath, and I found myself peculiarly, wonderfully, identified with the orange trees, with their very life and being. I was at my window, yet was I also in the orange grove—indeed, I was the orange grove. It was almost as if my consciousness flickered between George Arundale as George Arundale and George Arundale as the orange grove. I was two entities, yet one. And as I lived as the orange grove a gardener entered and began to pluck some of the oranges and to cut off some of the branches. All these things the gardener was doing to me. I rebelled—not as George Arundale might rebel, not with my mind and my will, but as orange groves apparently do rebel. I was conscious of discomfort, of loss, not exactly of pain but of something next door

to it. I was the more discomforted because the gardener did not treat me reverently or affectionately, but as if I were inanimate with no feelings, with no capacity for sensation. Why could he not realise that the same life was in us both? If he had only had the attitude of asking my permission, of begging my pardon, for his actions, of conveying to me that I could make others happy by sharing myself with them, I should not have minded so much. But he was callous, selfish, and treated the orange grove as a slave instead of as a comrade. He hurt me every time he plucked an orange or cut off a branch. With a different attitude on his part, he might have had all my oranges, all my branches, and we might have rejoiced together, for we could have worked together. As it was, being at his mercy and treated as his chattel, life was only just worth living, and I was a poor orange grove, because uncared for.

This experience of consciousness in the vegetable kingdom opened before my eyes an entirely new conception of consciousness at different levels of unfoldment, and of the implications of the all-embracing unity. I have never been the same since. I have never

been able to pluck a flower, or even to uproot a weed, without as it were silently explaining my reasons to the plant or to the weed, requesting a 'sacrifice' for some definite, I will not necessarily say larger, good. And I have never found any lack of co-operation. Interestingly enough, I always feel that I must justify my actions to the life which I am thereby affecting, and for this very reason I am more than ever a vegetarian. How can I explain, how can I have the face to explain, to sheep or cattle, to birds or fishes, that I ask them to sacrifice themselves, with an inevitable accompaniment of much suffering, simply to gratify my palate, or because I myself suffer from the delusion that I cannot live without eating flesh food? To make such a request is grossly, disgustingly selfish; and though I can behave, if I choose, like a robber or pirate, and steal by force, still there is fortunately just enough of the honourable gentleman about me, at least in this particular direction, to cause me utterly to decline to make so monstrous a demand, whereby I must inevitably lower the dignity of the kingdom to which I belong, making the sub-human kingdoms wonder what kind of evolution it is that causes those who

should know better to prey upon those who cannot resist force, whose only defence is their right to live.

From time to time I have had other visions of this glorious unity, but none so inexpressible as that which marked the opening of the doors of Nirvana to the knock I had learned to give.

One night I suddenly awoke with a most vivid remembrance of a supreme exaltation, of a marvellous expansion of consciousness, absolutely indescribable, though then and there I felt I must somehow or other record it on paper. It was about 1 a.m., and part of me was very much disinclined to take the trouble to sit up and write, even though pencil and paper were by my bedside—as has been my habit for some time in case an idea came during the fruitful hours when sleep minimizes physical interference. But another part of me insisted. So I sat up and wrote that with which this book begins, and I remember hearing: "This is Nirvana." And I knew it was Nirvana. I was immensely astonished, I confess, for I had never before given a thought to Nirvana, at all events on the physical plane. What I wrote was very

strange to me at first. My waking consciousness was not accustomed to reflect Nirvanic consciousness, and the process of remembrance was physically painful. However I wrote down all that came to me, and my pencil found it exceedingly difficult to travel at the rate at which the thoughts poured through. I could hardly read my own handwriting, so fast I wrote ; and certainly I hardly knew what I was writing. I wrote for hours, and was all aglow with exaltation. The whole of my being seemed re-oriented. I was born again; and when the day came I found all changed. A new note had been sounded in my being, new values had come to everything, and since then I have been occupied in readjustment, so that I may gradually blend my old world with my new world. Practically the whole of the book had been written either between 1 a.m. and 4 a.m. or between 4 a.m. and 6 a.m., and many nights have been passed in the physically painful, though spiritually wonderfully uplifting, process of striving to hold a reflection of Nirvana in the physical brain and in the waking consciousness.

Needless to say, even the most beautiful description of Nirvana which could be conceived

out here must inevitably be nothing less than a caricature of Nirvana as it in reality is. What then must my poor efforts be! It is almost a blasphemy to publish them, even as a feeble attempt to indicate a shadow of Nirvanic glories. They fall indescribably short of the reality. Yet it seems to be better to have even these than nothing; and many who have read some extracts have felt an upliftment. With Bishop Leadbeater's encouragement, therefore, this book is issued as a poor sketch by an unpractised hand, conveyed through deadening media, of a world of incomparable glories. I ought to add that even the glories I know can only be those of the very lowest sub-plane of Nirvana, and even then only a few of the glories of this sub-plane, for I have only just been born into Nirvana, and have yet to develop the senses appropriate to my new world.

As time passes, however, more and more of Nirvanic consciousness penetrates my being, and it is as if I had begun a stupendous journey from a great Resurrection to an Ascension the glories of which are as different from those of Nirvana as is the Sun from our Earth.

I hope the account of my own experiences will help others to contact this royal consciousness of Nirvana. It is within the near reach, no doubt, of many; while some to-day, and many in days gone by, have known Nirvana as I can only hope to know it after long effort and concentration. My own description is not, of course, of Nirvana as it actually is, even on the lowest sub-plane. It is of Nirvana as it has appeared to me, of as much of Nirvana as I have been able to assimilate. Much of the description is doubtless coloured by my personality. Another description, totally different, might well be quite as true, possibly far more true. I can only say I have done the best I could with the powers at my disposal, and I am well aware that the narrative is in many ways made up of a number of disconnected parts. The reason for this is that I have written night after night as I was moved to write, without thought of what I had already written. Each section is, therefore, the pen-impression of a particular vision of the Nirvanic landscape, just as it impressed itself upon me at the time.

GEORGE S. ARUNDALE

NOTE TO THE SECOND EDITION

I AM naturally gratified that after a few months a second edition of *Nirvana* is demanded. I think the value of the little book has been more in the direction of suggestion as to lines of experiment than as a description of the conditions obtaining under the Nirvanic mode of consciousness. Frankly, the reader will find little description, for description is impossible; but he will find many impressions, and my advice to him is to pay just as much or as little attention as he feels disposed to the details of the various impressions, and to concentrate on the atmosphere of which they are particular expressions as the result of the medium, George Arundale, through which the atmosphere must needs filter. For example, I write of Lightning-standing-still. A reader might well exclaim: "Ah! I think I know what you mean. I should not call it Lightning, nor Lightning-standing-still. I should call it so and so. That would be the kind of filtration

I should get from that selfsame atmosphere which we both sense, but which I should describe so differently." Let *Nirvana* help you to Nirvana, be your road what it may. All I can say is that I happened to take a route which I have described as best I could in the following pages.

With this latitude open to every reader, there is one door I want to shut in his face, and that is the door of common sense. If you have nothing but common sense at your disposal I am afraid *Nirvana* will mean little or nothing to you. To understand either Buddhi or Nirvana a distinctly uncommon sense is needed. Common sense will not help you in these regions any more than it will help you to understand modern physics since Einstein. Bertrand Russell tells us in his *A. B. C. of Relativity* that a new kind of thinking must dawn upon our mental worlds as a result of the introduction of new conceptions and notions regarding physical things, even though these conceptions and notions be by no means yet entirely verified. He adjures us to start thinking in terms of these " modern physical notions rather than in terms of the notions derived from common sense and embodied

in traditional physics". That is exactly what has to be done by those who have contacted the outer fringes of Buddhi and Nirvana. It is not common sense and the tradition of the lower worlds with which they are now concerned, but rather with an uncommon sense which is an extraordinarily refined sense, as yet extremely uncommon but some day to become common in its turn. Remember that the use of uncommon sense does not mean that we cease to be efficient in the lower worlds. On the contrary, we become far more efficient, for we build with stone and not with sand. We live more truly because nearer to the Real, even though in its ignorance and common sense the outer world may laugh, ridicule, persecute, despise. Indeed, Bertrand Russell goes further than I should have dared to go, though by no means further than I should be prepared to go, in the following startling utterance taken from the same little book:

> It is possible that the desire for rational explanation may be carried too far ... every apparent law of nature which strikes us as reasonable is not really a law of nature, but a concealed convention, plastered on to nature by our love of what we, in our arrogance, choose to consider

rational. Eddington hints that a real law of nature is likely to stand out by the fact that it appears to us irrational, since in that case it is less likely that we have invented it to satisfy our intellectual taste.

A profoundly true utterance which, had it been widely appreciated in times gone by and were it widely appreciated to-day, would have saved many apostles of truth from persecution and martyrdom and would enable the world to derive far more benefit than it does from the researches of occultists and mystics—true pioneers, true seekers after "real laws of nature" through the "irrational" and super-rational.

I have made many corrections and a number of additions and modifications in this new edition, and I have added a new chapter—"Further Thoughts"—containing a few results of further meditations. I hope these also will prove interesting, and provocative of pioneering in the same direction.

G. S. A.

CONTENTS

CHAP.		PAGE
	Foreword	vii
	Author's Preface	ix
	Note to the Second Edition	xix
I.	The First Glimpse	1
II.	The First Readjustment	31
III.	The Inner Light upon Outer Things	47
IV.	A Meditation in the Himalayas	68
V.	Some Reflections	95
VI.	The Awakening of Nirvana	111
VII.	The Theosophical Society	124
VIII.	The Immanence of Light	133
IX.	A Further Readjustment	163
X.	Further Thoughts	188
XI.	Mother-Light	207
XII.	The Dangers of Nirvana	220
XIII.	The Glorious Task	229
	Envoi	241
	APPENDICES	
	A	243
	B	248
	C	256
	D	264
	E	266

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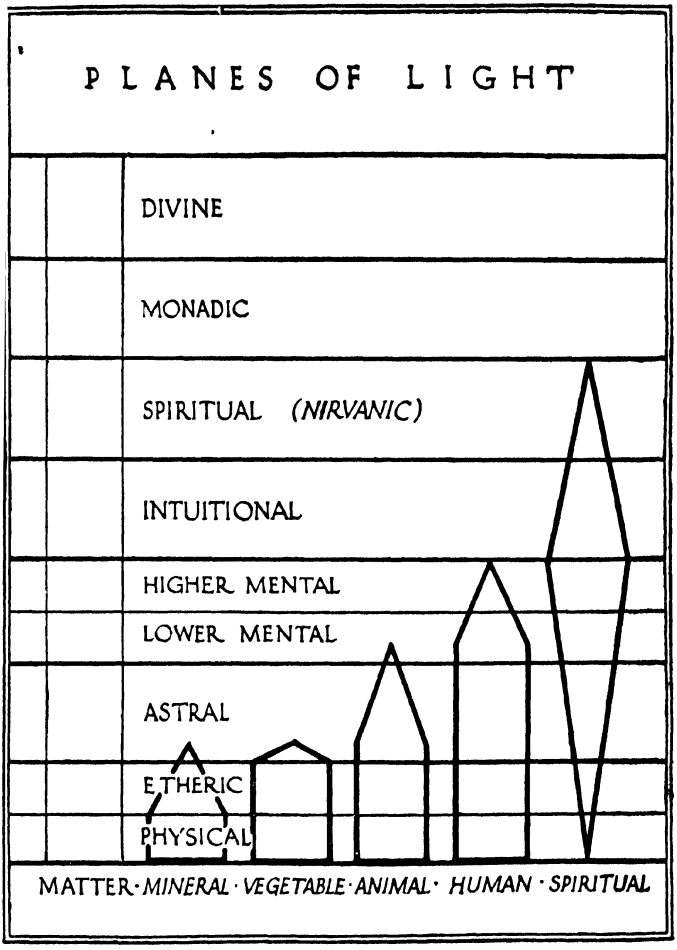


[NOTE: *The Intuitional Plane is referred to throughout the text as the Buddhic Plane*]

CHAPTER I

THE FIRST GLIMPSE

Magnificent
The morning rose, in memorable pomp,
Glorious as ere I had beheld. In front
The sea lay laughing at a distance; near
The solid mountains shone, bright as the clouds,
Green-tinctured, drenched in empyrean light;
And in the meadows and the lower grounds
Was all the sweetness of a common dawn,—
Dews, vapours, and the melody of birds,
And labourers going forth to till the fields.

Ah! need I say, dear Friend, that to the brim
My heart was full; I made no vows, but vows
Were then made for me; bond unknown to me
Was given, that I should be, else sinning greatly,
A dedicated Spirit. On I walked,
In thankful blessedness, which yet survives.

WORDSWORTH,
(*The Prelude*, Bk. IV)

MY first remembrance is of seeing the Master K.H.[1] looking as I had never seen Him before.

[1] Those who have undergone occult training are aware how supremely magnificent as a Teacher is this Great

Radiant He is always, supremely radiant, but now He was more than radiant, and I cannot find a word down here to describe Him in the glory in which I perceived Him with the first flash of Nirvanic consciousness. Majestic and radiant are poor words—"blinding" perhaps expresses it better, for just for a moment I was overwhelmed. I almost wanted to veil my face from sight of Him, and yet I could not keep my eyes from Him, so unfathomably splendid did He appear—only less glorious than the KING[1] as I afterwards realised, though at the time no greater glory could I conceive.

Master. He is, of course, a high Official in the world's education department, and apprentices from all departments have the honour to come under His inspiring guidance. I myself have had this honour, and although I do not belong to the education department, I still have the inestimable privilege of His gracious guidance. It was a great joy to me to enter the new pathway under the benevolent watchfulness of this gracious Friend, to Whom I owe so much; and it was a great joy, too, to make the entry with the help of the Master's representative in the outer world, our wonderful elder brother Bishop Leadbeater. Only those who have had C. W. L. as teacher can possibly know all that a teacher can really be. The evil-minded and the ignorant traduce him, as it is their habit to traduce others of his great line; but future generations shall rise up and call him blessed, while to-day there are many who count it their greatest joy to stand by his side as his persecutors yelp at his heels.

[1] The Supreme Ruler of this world, the veritable KING, within Whose consciousness all things live and move and have their being. Some there are in the world who have

I summon up my courage. I feel as if He were saying to me: "Welcome to a new kingdom which you must learn to conquer." In His power my consciousness unfolds, and I step as it were across a threshold into Nirvana. Words and phrases, however beautiful, however majestic, almost desecrate as they strive to describe conditions there. Even the faint touch of first experience of this lofty level dwarfs into insignificance all other experiences of all other planes, save only the entry into the presence of the One Initiator. I remember my first glimpse of the Buddhic plane on the occasion of admission to the ranks of the Great White Brotherhood. I recall to this day my marvelling at the vision of the Master in His Buddhic vehicle; and well do I remember in the days that followed, the wondrous sense of unity with all things, with the trees and flowers, feeling with them all, growing with them and in them, suffering and rejoicing in and with them. I remember, too, the casting off of the friend of ages—the causal body, and

seen Him, but who can only gaze upon Him as He veils His glory before their feeble eyes. He is indeed the Lightning, in the Light of which Nirvana is but shadow. And as the first glimpse comes of Nirvana, there comes with it the memory of an audience of the KING—the marvellous stillness, then the blinding Presence, and then the power to see.

I remember a vivid rending contrast between the moment before and the moment after the glimpse into the new kingdom. I remember how it was as if from out the sunshine I had suddenly entered a dark tunnel with a seemingly unending vista of blackness stretching infinitely far into a limitless beyond. Was there light at the end? I could see none. Must this blackness last for ever? Well, be it as it may, I must enter this tunnel, for I can do no other, to quote the words of Luther. Darkness enfolds me, blackness permeates me. Shall I never again know light? Yet I look forward and press onward. And at last the tunnel ends, the blackness vanishes, and I step into a light more glorious by far than the light I left. I had to let go the light I knew in order that I might enter into a light more real. It seems to be ever thus. That which we are ready to let go, to lose, we find unto life eternal. In the occultist there must be a spirit of daring, of adventure, of eagerness to risk. He must be willing to let the lesser go before he has grasped the greater. And in the interspace there is a momentary loneliness which must be borne happily and joyfully, for it is in loneliness that is born the power to strive, the strength to sustain and to protect. Those who cannot

endure loneliness are not yet ready to be moulded into leaders of men.

But to-day the Master seems to me as One Whom I have never known before, robed in the glories of a Kingdom I am entering as a little child. The new consciousness enfolds me, and in a moment my world is full of new, strange, glorious values. All is different, supremely different, though the same. A new Divinity is open to my eyes, and unfolds to my gaze a new meaning, a new purpose. It is the Buddhic unity transcended, glorified—a more marvellous unity ; in some wonderful way it is merged in a state vaster and more tremendous. There is something even more true than the truth in the unity I have so far known, something more real. It seems impossible, and yet it is so.

What is the nature of that of which even Buddhic glory is but a limitation ? I must use words, and words seem a terrible anti-climax. I can only say it is the Glory of a Light Transcendent, a world of Light which is the image of God's own Eternity. Face to face do I seem to be with an " unspotted mirror " of His Power and with an image of His Goodness. And the mirror, the image, is an endless ocean of Light, in which I once again become (though

in one sense I already have been) merged by an apotheosis of at-one-ments on plane after plane below. It is another baptism, another immersion into the Waters of the Real. At every stage of growth a baptism, to be succeeded by a confirmation, to be followed some day by an ordination, a consecration to, because an identification, whether complete or not, with the Higher Self. Brotherhood in the outer world; unity in the Buddhic world; light transcendent in Nirvana. And if on the threshold I am transported by its glory, how shall it be when I begin to ascend to the summit? Description falters even before this first lifting of the veil. Thought and feeling distort and narrow infinitely. At best one can but suggest and hint. The rest is a matter of individual incommunicable experience.

This Light Transcendent is even nearer to the Real than the Buddhic Unity which hitherto had seemed the most stupendous fact in all the world. Light the beginning; Light the path; Light the future. God said: "Let there be Light," and there was and is Light indescribable. Beautiful as is the light in the world, it is but the faint and feeble image of the Light Triumphant—the adjective somehow seems appropriate—of these regions of the Real.

It is the Sun-Light of the Sun ere it descends into the forms in which we know it. It is Light purified of form. It is Light which is the Life of form. It is an ever-present " intimation of immortality," a Future within the Now, and thus Eternal. It is an—I do not say " the "—apotheosis and essence of the light we know. All the glory of the most wonderful dawn (and one feels nothing can be more wonderful than a perfect Eastern dawn), is brought to glorious fruition and splendid perfection in that eternal noon-day which is Nirvana. The glory of the Buddhic plane is but the dawning of a Nirvanic Day.

Yet, as I write these words, I remember knowing, as I stood awe-struck upon the threshold of Nirvana, that beyond even that, to me, supreme unfoldment lay unfathomable, immeasurable splendours, to which Nirvana itself—the noon-day of the Buddhic dawning —is but as a dawn, a promise, a shadow. I could sense this. I had to sense it to preserve my balance. I must hold fast to proportion even in these stupendous regions. That Unity could be transcended I knew, for was not the Light-Glory before my eyes?. But there is more even than Light-Glory. Some day in the far-off future I shall know a

Glory that is even more than the Glory of Light.

I call this Light of Nirvana the noon-day of the Buddhic dawn. But it is only noon-day because for the time being it represents the utmost capacity of my consciousness. Some years ago the Light of Buddhi was the noon. To-day it is but dawn, glorious though it be. And there will come a time when the Light of Nirvana will be but dawn because I shall know another noon. It is because I live for the moment in the Eternal that I can thus preserve my balance. I can perceive no ultimate noon-day, even though I can perceive no other noon-day than Nirvana. I look back upon glorious dawns, and upon glorious noon-days. I see before me other noon-days before which this Nirvanic noon-day itself must pale into a dawn. Is there no limit to growth? None that I can perceive. And if I talk of dawns and noon-days, are there also evenings, even-tides, glorious evenings, evenings no less wonderful than the dawns, with light as beautiful as the light of dawn, as the light of noon-time? I think there are. There are no nights, perhaps; at least no blackness. But there comes from time to time a stillness, a hush, which is the Silence of a consummation.

There comes the hush, the silence, the stillness, just before a birth into a new region of Light, just before a new dawn. It is not that the noon-day light has lessened, but that a light more glorious still is beginning to shed its refulgence upon a lesser light, so that it is as if a noon-time had turned to evening by reason of contrast with the greater glory to be. And in that evening, in that hush which is the shadow of a greater glory, the neophyte gathers up reverently the powers he has gained, to use them in the conquest of the new kingdom of Light about to appear above the horizon.

God is Light, Light is God. Man is Light. All is Light. A new meaning to the ancient Egyptian exhortations: "Look for the Light!" "Follow the Light!" Perceive and learn to be at one with the Light of God in all things. I look upon the world. I see the world in terms of Light. God-Light in manifestation in man-light, in rock-light, in tree-light, in creature-light. All is light—a blinding glory at the centre, translated into colour-light, into sound-light, into form-light, into substance-light as it descends into ever-increasing manifestation. At the circumference light as we know it in the manifested universe, light

expressed in innumerable ways. At the centre that glory which is beyond all form, all colour, all substance. Yet the circumference is but the centre externalised, so there is the blinding glory everywhere—the God-Light—the blazing seed of futurity in each individual thing in every kingdom.[1] The light-seed unfolds its essence, its being, and becomes a world, a universe.

In each kingdom of Nature, seven great pathways of Light, potential in each kingdom in the beginning, unfolding into glorious fruition at the close. I see the diamond, the ruby, the emerald, the sapphire—kings of the mineral kingdom—superb in the perfection of their colours. Yet at the bottom these glories exist, imprisoned, slowly being released through the evolutionary process, until they stand free and splendid as the kingdom's jewels.

May I quote here a beautiful passage from Ruskin's *The Ethics of the Dust* in which he describes the glorious pathway of evolution in the mineral kingdom, the Light in prison becoming the Light free, thence to enter into

[1] Compare, in this connexion, that very interesting book "Colour-Music: The Art of Light," by A. B. Klein. (Crosby Lockwood & Son, London.)

higher tabernacles to tread pathways no less glorious and virtually identical in process?

A pure or holy state of anything is that in which all its parts are helpful or consistent. The highest and first law of the universe, and the other name of life, is, therefore, 'help'. The other name of death is 'separation'. Government and co-operation are in all things, and eternally, the laws of life. Anarchy and competition, eternally, and in all things, the laws of death.

Perhaps the best, though the most familiar, example we could take of the nature and power of consistence, will be that of the possible changes in the dust we tread on.

Exclusive of animal decay, we can hardly arrive at a more absolute type of impurity, than the mud or slime of a damp over-trodden path, in the outskirts of a manufacturing town. I do not say mud of the road, because that is mixed with animal refuse; but take merely an ounce or two of the blackest slime of a beaten footpath, on a rainy day, near a manufacturing town. That slime we shall find in most cases composed of clay (or brickdust, which is burnt clay) mixed with soot, a little sand, and water. All these elements are at helpless war with each other, and destroy reciprocally each other's nature and power: competing and fighting for place at every tread of your foot; sand squeezing out clay, and clay squeezing out water, and soot meddling everywhere, and defiling the whole. Let us suppose that this ounce of mud is left in perfect rest, and that its elements gather together, like to

like, so that their atoms may get into the closest relations possible.

Let the clay begin. Ridding itself of all foreign substance, it gradually becomes a white earth, already very beautiful, and fit, with help of congealing fire, to be made into finest porcelain, and painted on, and be kept in kings' palaces. But such artificial consistence is not its best. Leave it still quiet, to follow its own instinct of unity, and it becomes, not only white, but clear; not only clear, but hard; not only clear and hard, but so set that it can deal with light in a wonderful way, and gather out of it the loveliest blue rays only, refusing the rest. We call it then a sapphire.

Such being the consummation of the clay, we give similar permission of quiet to the sand. It also becomes, first a white earth; then proceeds to grow clear and hard, and at last arranges itself in mysterious, infinitely fine parallel lines, which have the power of reflecting, not merely the blue rays, but the blue, green, purple, and red rays, in the greatest beauty in which they can be seen through any hard material whatsoever. We call it then an opal.

In next order the soot sets to work. It cannot make itself white at first; but, instead of being discouraged, tries harder and harder; and comes out clear at last; and the hardest thing in the world: and for the blackness that it had, obtains in exchange the power of reflecting all the rays of the sun at once, in the vividest blaze that any solid thing can shoot. We call it then a diamond.

Last of all, the water purifies or unites itself; contented enough if it only reach the form of a dewdrop: but, if we insist on its proceeding to a more perfect consistence, it crystallises into the shape of a star. And, for the ounce of slime which we had by political economy of competition, we have, by political economy of co-operation, a sapphire, an opal, and a diamond, set in the midst of a star of snow.

. . . I have asked you to hear that, children, because, from all that we have seen in the work and play of these past days, I would have you gain at least one grave and enduring thought. The seeming trouble—the unquestionable degradation—of the elements of the physical earth, must passively wait the appointed time of their repose, or their restoration. It can only be brought about for them by the agency of external law. But if, indeed, there be a nobler life in us than in these strangely moving atoms;—if, indeed there is an eternal difference between the fire which inhabits them, and that which animates us—it must be shown, by each of us in his appointed place, not merely in the patience, but in the activity of our hope; not merely by our desire, but our labour, for the time when the Dust of the generations of men shall be confirmed for foundations of the gates of the city of God. The human clay, now trampled and despised, will not be—cannot be—knit into strength and light by accidents or ordinances of unassisted fate. By human cruelty and iniquity it has been afflicted;—by human mercy and justice it must be raised: and, in all fear or questioning of what is or is not, the real message of creation, or of revelation, you

may assuredly find perfect peace, if you are resolved to do that which your Lord has plainly required—and content that He should indeed require no more of you—than to do Justice, to love Mercy, and to walk humbly with Him.

In every kingdom it is the same. The free time after time realizing its imprisonment because it has conquered its kingdom, and bursting its bonds afresh that a still mightier and more splendid freedom may be achieved. The flower of every kingdom an unfolded colour-glory, sound-glory, substance-glory, form-glory, passing thence to win a nobler freedom. Of course, the word "imprisonment" is hardly accurate, for there is probably little, if any, sense of imprisonment until the prison-doors are about to be opened that the soul may enter into a bondage less restricted. Fortunately for us, we generally see our prisons only as we leave them. Until then a prison is an opportunity. Let us beware of so missing our opportunities that bondage takes their place, and a veritable prison-house closes in upon us.

Another image in my consciousness is of a Light-nucleus, imprisoned lightning, charged with the spirit of Divinity, as a Sun below the horizon of the world, or of a kingdom of Nature, or of an individual member of a

kingdom of Nature, as the evolutionary process in each case begins. All is darkness and silently still. Life sleeps on the bosom of the Infinite. Higher and higher ascends the nucleus of Light, radiating ever upwards and outwards. Life stirs into activity, the world awakes. The dawn is at hand. A faint light glows, the rose of Light, as tenderness softly touching the eyes of the sleeping world. From out the dawn in its tenderness comes the dawn in its iridescent vigour—a wonderful aurora of colour—a veritable spectrum of Light. And then all colours bend before their Lord and Master, merging themselves in Him. The Sun has risen and passes onwards to the glory of a perfect day. The perfect Dawn is the Light which is Buddhi, but Nirvana is the Light which is the Day ; not yet the Eternal Noontide, but a partial consummation of the dawn.

Thus my image in terms of Colour-Light. But it comes to me in terms of Sound-Light. First, the soft note expressing the Divine essence, the key-note or basic tone of the individuality whatever it may be—the note which gives the individuality. Then the mystic chord, swelling as it were out of the single sound, the nature chord of the individuality. And so on into an equally veritable

spectrum of sound, an aurora of music, a great and majestic symphony declaring in terms of music the new goal to be achieved. A hush of soundless silence in which the glorious music of an achievement is marvellously merged, so that the very silence has become more vibrant, the Voice of the Silence has gained articulateness. In the hush, sound stirs once more to greater ends, and as time passes unfolds from archetypal note to mystic chord, from mystic chord to magic symphony, and then again that silence in which the symphony is blended, which it has enriched. Can you not hear your own growth in terms of colour, in terms of music? Can you not hear the faint beginnings, can you not pre-sense the mighty ends? I have heard the beginnings of Nirvana in terms of sound, in terms of colour; and I seem to hear as if far away in deep distance the symphony of the achievement of Nirvana, as I can dimly perceive the apotheosis of that Light which even at the outset is so hopelessly indescribable. Is there not a note which sounds the beginning of the Birth into the Mysteries of the Real? Is there not a symphony which marks its fruition, a symphony gathered up into a silence and issuing forth therefrom as the note of a new endeavour, the note of the Baptism? Is there

not the note and symphony of the Transfiguration, the note and symphony of a Crucifixion-Resurrection, of an Ascension, and of consecrations yet beyond? And so with Light. Lose yourselves, my readers, now and then at least in these reachings into the Real, bathe yourselves in these true imaginings. So do you gain a glimpse and an understanding of the Eternal, and of the inevitable glory beyond those contrasts which seem in time so dark and dreary but which thus serve to teach us of the sunshine everlasting.

Out of sleep and dream I am awake, though to regions beyond I may still be dreaming. But the dream is true, for it is the vision of the final conquest of the kingdom of man and the standing upon the threshold of the kingdoms of the superman. Let me try to put my vision otherwise. I look upon the world, and I see our Lord the Sun expressed in myriad suns. Each monad I perceive to be a Sun in miniature. The Sun Divine throws off spark-suns charged with all His attributes. The process of evolution begins, and these sparks burst into colour, or rather gradually unfold in terms of colour; rainbows with sun-hearts or nuclei or centres. God's Light thus imprisoned in form begins its long pathway

of transcending form, thus acquiring self-consciousness. Every atom of light is an atom of unconscious Divinity, slowly but surely fulfilling the will of the Sun that it shall become unfolded into self-conscious Divinity. Every atom is a Sun unconscious, and shall become a Sun self-conscious. And the Sun-Light, which is the Light that is free, shines upon the Sun-Light, which is the Light imprisoned ; Light the wanderer in the darkness, until the Light within and the Light without blend into a perfect whole, earth-light kissing Heaven-Light and becoming Sun-Light.

Bathed in the Lightning-standing-still which is Nirvana, I perceive the imprisoned lightnings in all things. I perceive the Light which is dull—the savage ; the Light which is bright—the man evolved ; the Light which is glory—the Superman, the Master. I see colour everywhere in process of transmutation, of glorification, of transcendence. There is no blackness anywhere in the sense of a negation of Light. God said : " Let there be Light." And there was and is light everywhere. " His Light shineth even in our darkness."

And as before I might express my vision in terms of sound, of music, in terms of

gloriously growing forms. For, as time passes, I begin to perceive that while my first impression found instant expression in the word "Light," and specially in the phrase "Lightning-standing-still," I now know that this Light conception is but a quality of Nirvana, an aspect, a facet of the diamond sphere. In truth, Nirvana is an essence of things and a flower of things. It is an Alpha and an Omega. I am gradually, though only very, very slowly, beginning to look for Nirvana in all things. I cannot say that I have found Nirvana in all things, but I think I have reached the point of at least knowing that Nirvana is there. I know, though I do not yet perceive. I may, perhaps, best describe to you this knowledge in terms of Light, or it may be in terms of Sound, or in terms of Form. But Nirvana is beyond all these. Nirvana is a Mode of Being, a Mode that transcends Light and Sound and Form, though shadowed at least in all that we can know down here of the most glorious Light, Sound and Form. Have you tried to transcend the farthest limits of your consciousness? Have you ever striven to rise, first measurably and then almost immeasurably, above and beyond yourself? Have you

ever tried to know your bondage and then to burst the bonds? Have you ever recognized your limitations, your many weaknesses, and have you then ever known yourself as having triumphed over them, so that you have become unrecognizable to yourself as well as to others? Thus do you reach after Nirvana, however long may be the road on which you have to travel. Light—yes; Sound—yes; even Form from out the Formless—yes. But Nirvana is a mighty Spiritual Essence of all these things, and you approach it by learning to transcend yourself, to be an alchemist transmuting marvellously the lower into the higher. Awake! Arise! Know that Nirvana is your very being, and therefore realise yourself.

Everywhere in God's workshop of the world, Master-Painters, Master-Singers, Master-Sculptors, Master-Builders at work. Sun-Light the common material. Sun-Light fashioned into forms—colour-forms, sound-forms, forms of every kind; but all Sun-Light. And we are apprentices to these Masters of Crafts, and fashion after them in our childish ways. Yet we, too, are some day to become Master-Crafsmen, Masters of the Light in the future as we are children of the Light to-day. From darkness our

Masters of the Light lead us to the Light, from the darkness and colour-divisions of unconscious divinity into the pure white radiance of Divine Self-Consciousness. But as I hold Nirvanic consciousness in the valleys of my being, as I remember the summits while living on the plains, I can for the time being transcend time. There is, as long as the Nirvanic consciousness holds, no becoming, no dawning, no colour—only a perfect Radiance, beginningless and endless. It is thus that Nirvana is Bliss, and I know now why some Great Ones enfold Themselves in it to the end of the Age. It is a supreme consummation, and opens out a Pathway of stupendous glory.

I realise, too, that here is no selfishness, there could be none, of course, in entering Nirvana and exploring it to the end, if end there be. To abide in Nirvana, not to go forth therefrom, is a form of service to the world, for to enter Nirvana is to make a channel between the world and Nirvana so that the world is one step nearer to the Nirvanic dawn, and in some indescribable way the world is drawn into Nirvana, or should I rather say becomes more "Nirvanic," because a Son of the world abides therein.

I look upon races, upon nations, upon peoples, upon faiths, upon communities—as colours in the universal spectrum, and yet each a spectrum in itself. I must study these colours, that I may the more purposefully serve. I see Australia. I see our Australian Section—the Sun-nucleus of the Australian continent. I see the colour-scheme of things everywhere. I see that colour matters infinitely, in the little things as well as in the big. For everywhere is a message as well as an individual growth. There is a message in the colour of the clothes we wear, in the colour of our furniture, of our objects of daily use, in our music and drama and painting; yes, and even in our magazine, *Advance*! *Australia.* Does its blue printing speak its message truly? Does not black printing convey less of God's message than colour printing?

I know the power of Light, and therefore the power of colour. The Nirvanic Light is power, not cold power, but blazing power, at least as I sensed it. And even the word "power" is a limitation, for I know now in a measure that I can begin to understand the meaning of the three great attributes of God-Light—Omniscience, Omnipotence, Omnipresence. I see each colour emerging from its

archetype, descending into darkness, ascending into Light. At first faint, dim, crude, changing from shade to shade. The swinging of the pendulum of growth between the colours of darkness and the colours of Light. Gradually, slowly, the fiercer hues of the colours of discord and of hatred mellow into the splendid shades of Love.

I know the Universes to be colour-schemes. One universe a rose scheme, another a yellow scheme, a third a blue scheme, and so on. What is our colour-scheme? Rose? Perhaps, and yet its heart is the blinding, glorious Light containing within itself all light-rates within the mighty octave of its Being.

And now, in the light of further experience, I can begin to interpret races, peoples, nations, faiths, communities, in terms other than of Light, of colour. I hear them all building their respective symphonies, resolving—slowly I am afraid—their inevitable discords into equally inevitable harmonies. And these various music-strivings go to the building of the great world Symphony, the basic note and chord of which is present in variations in every subdivision of the world whether large or small. I have written of our Universe as possibly a Rose Universe. Is our earth a yellow

sub-division of the general rose scheme? What is the Note of our Universe, and what is the earth's variant thereof? This is a most fascinating theme for study, but as I am at present only in the region of speculation, guessing, imagining, it seems hardly profitable to pursue the investigation further. The point is that entry into Nirvana is an approach to the basic things of Being, those things which are omnipresent and, from one point of view, changeless. Nirvana is omnipresent. Nirvana is present in colour, in sound, in form, in substance. Nirvana is the essence of them all; or should I not rather say a form of the essence of them all, a fundamental mode of the root of their being?

I am living in a Light-Eternity. I descend into a Colour-Time. Time is the breaking up of Light-Eternal into colour; and there is the Light of the past, the Light of the present, the Light of the future. Yet all within an Eternal Now.

The world seems new with a new sacredness. The Power of the Light is in all things. Through our very physical senses we touch the Light which is Divinity. It lies about us, and in us. As we have variations round a music-note or music-theme or motif, so is the world

an almost infinite number of variations upon the theme of the Universal Light. It is a Symphony of Light. It is also a Symphony of Sound, and no less a Symphony of Silence. It is a Symphony of Colour and of Form. And there are those who, hearing the Archetypal Symphony, seek to mellow the harsh notes and cruder colours and forms of ignorance so that the world orchestra, composed of all manifested life as the musicians, may, under the baton, the mighty Rod of Power of the world's Supreme Conductor, make a music glorious—the archetype one with the actual.

The process of evolution is a process of the individualization of Light on the way to re-universalization on the plane of self-consciousness. Music is Light. Fire is Light. The Arts and the Sciences are Light in evolution growing under the laws of Light. The Scriptures tell us of the Light. There is a great Gospel of the Light, whence comes every faith, and to proclaim which comes every Saviour. Light is right; darkness is wrong. We grow towards the Light as do the trees and flowers.

I see our Lord the Sun in each of us. Is the heart the sun of our body-world? Does the blood reflect His rays? Are not all things Light-terms, Light-formulæ?

What is Nirvana? The Light Divine. I am touching, perhaps only for a moment, its lowest reaches, its densest layers. All I have written is but of the Light Divine in its lowest Nirvanic aspect. I cannot conceive down here even this Glory, but it leaves in me as I return to earth a new perception of Reality. I have taken a step nearer to the Real. There is a greater comradeship in the world than I had thought—a deeper identity, a more glorious origin, a more glorious way, and a more glorious goal. Round me everywhere and at all times are God's Sunshine Messengers. Every colour speaks His Word and His Voice. Every form breathes His purpose. I, dust in the Sunshine, yet am part of it, and looking upward to the Sun I see the sign of my own Divinity, and the embodied promise of my ultimate achievement. As is our Lord the Sun so shall we all be, for He has willed it so.

Light is language, thought, vesture and vehicle. A flash of light conveys for us down here a whole philosophy. The whole of this pitifully feeble amount of Nirvanic experience was doubtless within a single flash of Nirvânic Light penetrating my being, or rather perhaps stirring at last from age-long dormancy within me.

Light is the Will of the Sun, the Wisdom of the Sun, the Love of the Sun. It is written in books that Nirvana is bliss. Even from that outermost region, at the frontiers, I know Nirvana to be *infinitely* more. Just one glimpse and all things seem to be made new, within me and without me. I remain, yet am wholly changed, and everything round me seems to be undergoing a process of re-valuation. Even now, everything means far more than before. Every object, in every kingdom, seems in one way far more a shadow of Reality than a reality, for I perceive how feeble and inadequate must be all reflections of the Light. I did not know before that they were so feeble. And yet, equally true is it that every object is far more real, far less of a shadow of Reality, than I had thought. I see the prison-opportunity of form, and I perceive the shadows. I see the unfolding splendour of the Light-Eternal, and I perceive the Real. All other worlds are shadow-worlds compared with this Nirvanic world. And yet they are more real worlds because of this Nirvanic world, for I now perceive the seal of God's purpose set upon all things, and I must reverence all things in far deeper measure than before.

Philosophers talk of pure Being. I seem to be able to sense what pure Being must be, not because I have contacted it, but because I have contacted that which is less short of pure Being than all other consciousness-states I have so far experienced. At present, speaking as a child in this new kingdom, Nirvana to me is pure Life, Life which is Light. Not that colour has faded into this Light. Colour remains, but the spectrum of Nirvana is a glorification indescribable of the colour-spectra of the planes below. It is more Light than colour. Indeed, only as I grow a little accustomed to the Light, and my sensitiveness increases, beginning to adapt itself to its new environment, do I begin to perceive that within Nirvanic Light are marvellous manifestations of colour apotheoses, of colour relationships, schemes and interactions. For the moment, the sense of evolution is lost in the blinding glory of the Light. As I become more at home in a Home one never thinks to own until one enters at its doors, I shall realize, as I do not yet realize, that the eternal truth remains true, and becomes more true ; that to enter the Sun-Light, which is another way of saying to love God, there is only one road—the service of that Light which lighteth every man.

Thus. with a new power which I shall learn to use, do I seem to enter upon a deeper service. We are children of the Sun, sparks of this glorious Sun-Light. I look up into the sky and I see my King. Sun-worshippers worship more truly, perhaps, than they know. I, infinitesimal, ignorant and feeble, yes, even I, am a servant of the Sun. As He shines upon the whole universe, so must I shine upon my world. I must be sunshine, even as He is sunshine. It is sometimes said that we cannot see God. I think I can see Him in part, and know something of His sublimity, as I look upon the Sun. Even with my physical eyes, I know something of His glory, and the whole world around me is His glory in manifestation. But looking upon Him from the Nirvanic world, I know far, far more. Another veil is lifted, and a fuller Glory shines upon me.

No words can express my new sense of Him. It is, and must be, a mystery beyond words, beyond feeling, beyond even thought. Indeed, I must not even make the attempt; it is little short of blasphemy. But in the First Epistle General of St. John, beginning at the fifth verse of the first chapter, it is written:

This then is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you, that God is

Light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another.

And again in the second chapter of the same Epistle, beginning at the ninth verse:

He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.

A simple message, but profoundly true. "In Him is no darkness at all, neither shadow of turning." Upon us all shines His Light perpetual. May we ever dwell in the Light through the service of our brethren.

CHAPTER II

THE FIRST READJUSTMENT

> I compare . . . man's gradual progress in self-knowledge to his gradual decipherment of the nature and meaning of the sunshine which reaches him as light and heat indiscernibly intermingled.
>
> MYERS, (*Human Personality and the Survival of Bodily Death*).

IT is curious how, as the days pass, one becomes increasingly conscious of a readjustment to one's surroundings, as well as of a perpetual contact with the non-physical. My relationships with outer things have altered. It may be that the Buddhic unity has itself become intensified, for more of reverence seems *due* to everything—to inanimate as much as to animate objects. Indeed, I see clearly that there is nothing which is inanimate. All is animate with Sun-Light. All is alive with Sun-Sound, with Sun-Form. Even the minutest microcosm is a perfect macrocosm in miniature—the

pebble on the beach, the speck of dust, the least animate insect. God is not original. Having made His pattern, He never departs from it. Having chosen His pathway, He never diverges from it.

This perception of the wonderful sameness of all things, which means that in essence all things are vibrant with infinite potentiality, causes an interesting and significant physical reaction to the outer world. I must lift things more carefully, deliberately. I must touch things with more refinement in the touch. I must use things with a greater sense of the purpose to which (there is no exaggeration in the statement) they are dedicated. Nothing slipshod or careless is tolerable.

> Let knowledge grow from more to more,
> But more of reverence in us dwell,
> That mind and soul, according well,
> May make one music as before,
> But vaster . . .

There is much profound truth in these lines. Through increased reverence the music does become vaster. I perceive divinity in the fountain-pen with which I write these words. It seems unfair to the pen, indeed untrue to the essential being of the pen, if I do not try to write carefully and neatly. The pen suffers

other than physically if ill-treated, if used less reverently than it might be used. I seem to be under the necessity of educating, of co-operating with, my surroundings all the time, largely by my general attitude, but in no small measure by my more overt comradeship with the things that constitute them. My office tools depend upon me, look up to me. All this may be the intensification of the Buddhic principle, but it is more than this. Am I getting nearer to the truth when I suggest that the Unity of Buddhi is more an outward, forthgoing process, while the Unity of Nirvana is more an inward, indrawing process? Do I at the Buddhic stage perceive my oneness with the world, and at the Nirvanic stage perceive the potentiality of all things within me? I think there is something of this kind, for our Lord the Sun seems at the Nirvanic stage to become the centre of my being.

On further contemplation, it seems as if at the Buddhic stage one goes out to find the Unity, while at the Nirvanic stage one begins to realize it everywhere. At the Buddhic stage one travels from centre to circumference, finding the centre as much at the circumference as at the centre, if you understand what I am trying to convey. At the Nirvanic stage,

that which has been two and yet one in two, becomes one. All is centre, and one is on the verge of the conception that under a certain mode of consciousness a centre need have no circumference, for all is within the centre. We draw circumferences just as we draw double lines for easier writing. But we do not need them, and Nirvana is the state of doing without them. At the Buddhic stage there is more of realization. At the Nirvanic stage there is more of Being.

As I have already written, the Sun seems to be my King, and I realize that down here I must be a sun, the sun of my world, as He is the Sun of His system. In Him is the source of all life. In me, too, is the source of all life, because I am in Him, and of His Being. His rays pervade worlds. Do not mine, however feebly, pervade a world? I am an infinity in the becoming because I am infinity in essence. Nothing is lacking in my nature to that stupendous end—the word "end" is, of course, absurd. I am light even as He is Light. The Nirvanic consciousness seems to produce a cognition of oneself as a throbbing, pulsating energy or power-nucleus, slowly but surely expanding, extending its kingdom far and wide, and itself becoming more and more

radiant as its frontiers are pushed forward into space. I can conceive that in the infinitely distant future my body shall be as the Sun and my kingdom a universe. I am brought face to face with my *potentiality*, and with its inevitable growth into power; it is a marvellous and stupendous grandeur; omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence—in the becoming. I enter my Sanctum Sanctorum. I enter the essence of my being. I perceive a burning, blinding Sun—a miniature of the Sun Himself.

It seems to me also that I am in constant contact with all outside me. This is probably a way of putting the fact that I am conscious on the plane of Universal consciousness, on which time and space are non-existent. An act of consciousness—and I contact whatever I desire to contact. It is not a question of going anywhere, of projection, but rather of tuning, and not even of tuning, but rather of attending. The act of attention makes the contact.

Of course, I am only at the very beginning of this, and I express myself badly and uncertainly, because I am merely a child, and use child-language to express unfamiliar relationships and to describe conditions about which I know next to nothing. I am just like a baby trying to describe all it met on its first journey

into the streets of the town, or the roads and lanes of the country-side. I have received impressions, but these filter through, have indeed been contacted by, undeveloped organs. Still, perhaps you sense the truth within the halting picture.

William James in one of his books has said that the nightingale of life's eternal meaning is for ever singing in men's hearts. From the standpoint of the Nirvanic consciousness I realize that this is profoundly true, but it means far more than probably he intended it to mean. The eternal meaning of life is indeed for ever singing in men's hearts, but it is not, I think, until Buddhic, and later Nirvanic, consciousness is opened that one begins to hear the song, or at any rate to begin to understand it. When one does begin to hear it in one's own heart, simultaneously one seems to hear it in the hearts of all things, even though it sings as yet to ears that are deaf. And then one knows that there is but One great Song of Life echoed in the hearts of men and things, be its variations infinite.

Such knowledge is it that brings one to a realization of the nature of Universal Consciousness. Hearing the Song of Life in harmony of Glorious Light and Colour in its

Nirvanic manifestation, one hears the sound of its eternal meaning in all things, and it is but an act of consciousness to hear its note in any particular individuality, and thus to contact that individuality intimately. It is, then, but a matter of tuning-in on to the wave-length required. The wireless apparatus is installed, even though very far from running smoothly, and I seem able to tune-in to all manner of things everywhere, to persons, to friends, to events, even though I may only rarely be able to hear accurately. I see the " dead " living on in other bodies, and with us all the time. I see the " living " in other parts of the world as near to me as those in physical propinquity. I can draw the whole world into me, and thus annihilate time and space. How much more than this world, so far as regards its sub-Nirvanic states, I may be able thus to draw in, I do not know. But I am just now beginning to perceive that the unfolding of Nirvanic consciousness brings one into touch with other worlds than this earth of ours. Certain planets, of course, may be contacted comparatively easily without Nirvanic consciousness, but its unfoldment makes possible journeys farther afield, for on the Nirvanic plane infinitely more of our universe begins to

be within reach. I have not yet journeyed far afield, but I find myself in touch with influences from distant places, the nature of which is for the time being more than strange. There are mighty influences at work among us, down here in our world, influences from far away, from other universes indeed as well as from other planets. I can say no more at the moment, for all is vague. But it is very intriguing. How strange one feels in one's new world, with its almost illimitable vistas and marvellous scenery, peopled with wonderful Presences, linking together even universes within a stupendous cosmos. It is a wonder that the physical brain can stand even the feeblest reflection of it all, for it is all so completely outside all previous experience. Clearly the physical brain could not stand the strain but for the previous Buddhic experience, which reinforced the brain, stamped it with Unity, enlarged its capacity, that it might gradually become ready for the further expansion. The Nirvanic note would have been shattering but for the tuning-in the Buddhic contact achieved.

How true it is that language in this case conceals thought and meaning! I need Nirvanic language to convey the sense of

Nirvanic things, and my hearers need Nirvanic understanding. How impossible to convey the sense of moreness in a medium which stops short at that very moreness! Still, perhaps you have an impression of that wondrous moreness, though until you too can begin to see, my words must often seem confused and even muddled. As Myers has said so beautifully:

> O, could I tell, ye surely would believe it!
> O, could I only say what I have seen!
> How should I tell or how can ye receive it,
> How, till He bringeth you where I have been?

The more one immerses oneself in even this lowest layer of Nirvanic consciousness the greater becomes the clarification of consciousness on the lower planes. It is like a fresh, pure stream of energy flowing through the great channels of life and vivifying the outlook at every stage. We are continually working under the Law of Readjustment, and each expansion of consciousness involves a further readjustment to the Eternal Reality. Purer and purer becomes the refracting medium as kingdom after kingdom of consciousness is conquered, till at last the Light of the Real shines through undimmed, or as

nearly undimmed as is possible in the Universe of the Relative.

One of the most striking examples of this clarification is in the discovery that it is far more possible definitely to know God than I had supposed. Does one attain a vision of God, of the Creator, in a Form capable of being understood by human consciousness? I seem to have perceived God, not as an abstraction but as a cognisable Reality—a Universality within a limitation, but the limitation rarefied enough to reveal to me in deeper measure the nature of the Universality of God. The expression is unsatisfactory, but it is as if I had experienced the Individuality of God. And the whole experience centres round the Sun which, putting it bluntly, I perceive to be the Physical Vehicle of God whereby He creates, gives, sustains and regenerates life. The Sun is, as it were, the Countenance of God, the Light of which shines upon all things. A little more and I could describe, in so far as description is at all possible, a manner of God's revealing of Himself on this Nirvanic Plane. Not God unveiled. I cannot see Him unveiled. The part cannot know the Whole as Whole. But I can see Him as He interposes a shadow

before my eyes. To me that very shadow, irridescent with God, is God, even though but a shadow. I see God in limitation. The part perceives a shadow of the Whole. The ocean of Nirvana is a Shadow of God. The ocean of every plane is God in Shadow. The higher the consciousness the more is the Shadow a true mirror of His Being.

I realize, too, more vividly the nature of Heaven, and somehow it does not seem so absurd to place Heaven in the heavens as I had thought. Of course, heaven is a State of Consciousness. There are many Heavens. Nirvana is a Heaven-world, infinitely greater than that higher mental plane to which we usually restrict the title. But is not the blue sky a Heaven in special measure? If I free myself from the bondage of earth and body restrictions, and bathe myself in the sky above the clouds, do I not experience a peace and a sense of the all-Power, the all-Wisdom and the all-Love of God, which inevitably decreases as I return to the physical level?

I seem also to be able to some extent to apply Eternity to the terms of Time. Do I not contact in some degree the Eternal Mind, or, should I say more truly, a Cosmic Mind, and then Cosmic Emotions and a Cosmic Physical

Plane? What is the difference between these Cosmic States and their denser counterparts? The first word that comes to me to express the difference is "Majesty". Mind stripped of all Time-mentality, of all constituents of the mental plane as we know it. Mind filled with the spiritual counterparts, the archetypes, of the constituents of our mental plane. The Cosmic Mind is an archetypal Mind which reflects itself in the objects of the mental plane. It is not Absolute Mind, but the nearest approach to Absolute Mind that I can so far conceive. The positive and the negative, the subject and the object, have disappeared, and there is pure Mind, Mind without the contrast between I and not-I, since the one is merged in the other.

The same experience obtains on the plane of the emotions. On this Cosmic plane I contact Cosmic Emotion, which impresses me as being Power in Motion. I have since often looked at a physical plane storm and have seemed to perceive in it a likeness to the plane of Cosmic Emotion, always assuming that the physical plane storm is supremely purposeful and stormy to great and well-defined ends. Cosmic Emotion is power in motion, in spiral swirl, in vast pulsation. Again, as in the case of the

Cosmic Mind, I cease to sense the pairs of opposites. There is no fundamental division of love-emotions and hate-emotions; they are mutually merged in archetypal emotion. I contact pure emotion, pure feeling, but not absolute emotion or absolute feeling. I sense the difference because I perceive a beyond, though I do not know the nature of that beyond. These two Cosmic states are reservoirs which feed their corresponding lower planes, and I see how the pairs of opposites down here emerge from a Unity within or above, but I feel sure that this very Unity itself is but relative. Further still within or above there is a still deeper Unity, compared with which the Unity I now contact is a world of diversity.

I perceive an Apotheosis of Death. There is no death, only change, and always change with purpose, change to a greater end. Death is recreation, renewal, the dropping of fetters, the casting aside of a vehicle which has ceased to suffice, the taking off of an overcoat. Death is in very truth a birth into a fuller and larger life, or a dipping down into matter under the law of readjustment. Progress always, and progress towards Unity. We come ever nearer to each other and to the Real through death. If only we could realize this!

I see that Death is a form of Happiness, and that only our distance from happiness prevents us from realizing the gift of happiness which death confers. We grieve because a friend has gone into the next room, and there seem to be no doors between his room and ours. Yet there are doors, and we might open them if we would and keep them for ever afterwards wide open. Grief is ignorance and often selfish. The more we know the less we shall grieve, for true knowledge is eternal happiness.

I turn for a change to myself. I somehow know that my aura has undergone, or is undergoing, a process of readjustment. Wherever there is an expansion of consciousness there is a modification in the aura. What modification is being brought about in my own? It seems as if it were being irradiated with Nirvanic Light. It has an electric intensity it did not before possess. The colours are in process of rearrangement, apparently in rings like the rings of Saturn. Possibly, indeed probably, this process began before, but the entry into Nirvanic consciousness has given it a great impetus. The silver light-threads of Nirvana seem to interpenetrate the whole aura, enriching and purifying the colours, and encircling, interpenetrating, my whole being, with a Web

of Light. The aura scintillates with Sun-Light. The aura sparkles in the Sun.

I have perceived since these words were written that not only does the aura undergo a Light modification, including a re-arrangement of the colour-scheme, but that the music of my being has undergone a beautiful enrichment. I feel myself to be music. True, all is music, and has been from the beginning. But at last I am beginning to understand my music and to be able to watch myself at work in the Workshop of Sound, assembling the notes I need for the Symphony I am dedicated to express, for the Sound-Universe it is my destiny to create. Physical plane Henry Ford assembling a motor car is but a reflection of innumerable spiritual Henry Fords assembling the Universes, of which they shall be the Suns, in the Colour Workshops, in the Sound Workshops, in the Great Laboratory of Evolution. The process is at work all the time, but only as we contact Buddhi, and later Nirvana, do we begin really to know what we are doing, and thus to do it more expeditiously and with more effective skill.

Each centre (there are many centres) glows with the new life and the new promise. Am I in the springtime of a new Cosmic year, of

which the summer of spiritual maturity is the Fifth of the Great Initiations, to the threshold of which sooner or later I shall come? "Conquer this kingdom and you stand on the threshold of the next." The seed of my being has thrust its Light-shoots through the soils of lower planes, and a bud is opening to the Sun in the pure Nirvanic air. Some day this bud will become a flower—a flower of earth's humanity in the garden of God. Every root shall grow its bud as it sends up its Light shafts through the unreal into the real. As Heaven-Light kisses Earth-Light the bud takes form and slowly expands into the flower. I seem to see, as this imagery comes to me, *the* Flower of Earth's Humanity—the Lord Buddha, a Flower of indescribable splendour, a radiant Lotus-form of golden Light.

CHAPTER III

THE INNER LIGHT UPON OUTER THINGS

The atom is a sun in miniature in its own universe of the inconceivably minute.

ANNIE BESANT AND C. W. LEADBEATER

(*Occult Chemistry*).

AS the glow comes before the fire, the dawn before the sunrise, so must the glow of dawning perfection slowly but surely steal over us, body after body, as a sign that the Sun within is learning to shine as shines so gloriously the Sun without. We need to be set on fire so that we may gradually become one with the Fire Eternal. We cannot know God as He is until we become all fire, even as He is all fire. Open your hearts, then, to His Sunlight, that your whole being may some day burst into flame, and thence into many flames—flames of Power, of Wisdom, and of Love. In each one of us the spark is ready, the spark of Divinity

waiting to become a Fire. Nothing can extinguish this spark, however dimly it may glow. At last the time must come for its emergence into flame, and thence into that Fire which till then has slept in the world of the potential.

We are set ready for the lighting. Let us concentrate upon ourselves the Rays of our Lord the Sun through the burning-glass of aspiration and of service, and Time, the sure and certain moulder of this burning glass, is God's witness that the spark shall thus become the Fire. May our service and our aspiration glow with the warmth of understanding, the warmth which stimulates, with the light of wisdom, the wisdom which clarifies, with the burning of power, the burning which purifies. I seem to contact here a note of a great Ritual of Light, and Light the medicine of the future. Light the Healer, Light the Redeemer, the Creator, the Preserver, the Regenerator. The inoculations and drugs of the future will be Light-variants, and the very food we eat will be concentrated Light, the form being used to collect, in varying ways, the sustenance which is the Sunlight.

But even more than this is there not a great Ceremonial of Light, a mystery of Light? Not on this globe, perhaps, but on some other more

advanced than this earth there is, I think, a mighty Magic of the Light which some day we shall know and use. I think that is the life of the colony of which Dr. Besant and Bishop Leadbeater write in *Man: Whence, How and Whither.* Light already begins to play a definite part, but Light is in fact the philosopher's "stone," the potent force of the alchemist, and some day the Science of Light will be recognized as the Science of Sciences, with its Laws, its Ritual, its Worship, its Philosophy, its Ethic and Æsthetic. I wish I had the wisdom to understand even a little of the Science, for it is the key to all other sciences. Some day it will be a Science intensely applicable even to the little things of everyday life. We shall become in a wonderful way children of Light because we are children of the Sun, and there will be a Eucharistic Service of the Light even more glorious, if possible, than the Eucharistic Service of our Lord the Christ.

I see our Lord the Sun distributing Himself through His universe, extending Himself through its immeasurable distances. I see His world learning gradually to use Him in His myriad aspects to meet its many needs.

I see these things to be, and I see that our Lord the Sun grows because He shines. He

grows by shining. So must we. As we shine so we grow. And as I realize this I turn outwards from the blinding glory of Nirvana to this world of ours living and growing in relative darkness. Light-sparks everywhere, glittering and scintillating as do the lights of a seaside town when viewed in the night from passing ships. Light-sparks in every kingdom of nature, some dim indeed, feeble, looking as if the slightest breath of adverse wind would blow them out and leave a darkness blacker than ever. But no spark that God has lighted from His Divinity can ever fade. Long may it remain feeble, slight may be the change through ages of time. But it grows irresistibly. In each kingdom, sparks there are of more vivid brightness—the jewels, the fruition, of the kingdom these. In the human kingdom I perceive that the sparks have become flames, some small, some large. I see that some of these flames are veritable light-houses, shedding light upon the true pathway of Life, warning from the ways of ignorance and pointing towards the pathways of wisdom. They warn from the rocky places and beckon along the channels of rapid growth. These are the world's true benefactors, seers and teachers, themselves on the threshold of those

kingdoms beyond the human in which are the mighty Fires growing into the semblance of the Fire of God. These are the Elder Brethren of the worlds, veritable Pillars of Fire upholding the Temple of Eternity! And all children of our Lord the Sun Whose Light lighteth all things. Do we not owe all to Him!

And here once again I compare the Buddhic plane with the Nirvanic. and I strive to distinguish. It is very difficult to express the facts at all accurately. I seem to see in the former an act of coalescence and in the latter an act of identity. I perceive the former to be the assertion, the realization, of Unity amidst, above, resolving diversity; while I perceive the latter to be a condition of receding from all diversity, with a consequent readjustment, reconfiguration, rearrangement of the Unity, so that it becomes a Oneness. Buddhi the One with the Second; Nirvana the One without a Second. Yes. I confirm my previous judgment. And beyond Nirvana? Even the One changes, casts aside another of the veils of the Real. Can I grope beyond this lowest subplane of Nirvana and look upwards upon the higher rungs of the Nirvanic ladder? No hard and fast divisions, no Light-tight

compartments. Is there not perhaps an intensification of the Oneness, for even at the bottom I find that any qualification of the Oneness, however true, is a limitation, a negation, of Nirvanic reality? Light? Yes, you can use the word to convey an infinitesimal fraction of the truth. Music. Sound? Yes, you can use these words too. But while you are using them you know that they veil the glory, even the little shaft of glory which is all you yet perceive. But let me drop these veils. What remains all the way up? Oneness. and of this Oneness no words may be used, no expression in terms of Light or Sound or Form conveys the slightest real meaning, only a suggestion which points in the direction of the Real. I will meditate on this Oneness, live in it. So shall I begin to know it, though not to convey the sense of it. And then shall come that which I can only now describe as Transcendence. But I have said enough. I am foolish to strive to measure with words the immeasurable.

I see that we evolve under the laws of counterpart and reflection. The world of Nirvana itself is a sublimated counterpart of the world below as much as it is an archetype. The planes above Nirvana are sublimated

counterparts, each in its own degree, of the Nirvana below them, the quality and nature of the counterpart being determined by the Light-vibration quality of the plane.

The development of the Nirvanic consciousness seems to affect the spirillæ in the brain, the kundalini, and the various centres generally ; as also, of course, the various bodies. I am conscious of a much more intense sensitiveness, of being much more highly strung. I am, as it were, an extremely sensitive plate, rather over-sensitive for conditions in the outer world. Probably I shall tone down in due course, but in the earlier stages outer living becomes almost painful.[1] One seems to know people and things far more accurately ; they

[1] As a matter of fact, in the light of further growth, I do not seem to tone down. On the contrary, the sensitiveness increases steadily. But I have it under increasing self-control, at all events up to a certain point. Life is more difficult from the standpoint of daily contacts, and does not grow less difficult. But to counteract the growing difficulty there is also growing an inner Peace which acts, may I descend for a moment into a very material simile, as a wonderful shock-absorber. But I realize that the time must come when it will no longer be possible to live in the outer world and maintain a maximum of effectiveness. It is for this reason, for the sake of more generous service, that our Elder Brethren live away from the haunts of Their younger comrades. They prefer to give of Their all rather than to have continually to protect Themselves against the discords of immaturity, thus using power which otherwise might be free for service.

become impressed upon me as they are, rather than as they seem to be.

It would seem that as the causal body disintegrates when the individual enters the Buddhic plane, so is it with the Buddhic vehicle as one enters the Nirvanic plane. This seems inevitable on what I call the plane of apotheoses, the essential plane, the plane of fundamental archetype. I notice that I do not write "archetypes," and the reason seems to be that from one point of view there is no plurality on the Nirvanic plane. Plurality begins on the plane below, and even there it is plurality overshadowed, dominated, by Unity. Of course, as one descends, the various bodies of lower planes are re-formed out of the matter of the planes according to the vibration rate of the permanent atom. Return from Nirvana, and the Buddhic vehicle is instantaneously formed. Return from the Buddhic plane, and a causal body is immediately ready for use, though not, of course, the age-long friend which reintegrates no more.

Why cannot anyone enter Nirvana? It is a question of time, of course, and a question as to how the time is occupied. Entry into Nirvana involves an expansion of consciousness, and the lesser expansions must precede the greater

It seems to be a matter of Sense of Reality. It is not enough to know what is called Truth. One must know something of what *is* Truth, which is generally quite another matter; and the Truth of things cannot be learned from books, or speeches, except in part. These help, as does also experience. But in some way one must not only discover Truth through experience, but also through a reaching out into that which is beyond experience—gradually making experience of that beyond. Similes come into my mind. Think of one of those curious puzzle-pictures which they give to children. Each puzzle has a title, and one works to that. This piece fits in here, that piece fits in there. Gradually the picture forms and becomes complete. So is it with life, and with the various planes of consciousness.

For example, an individual entering into Buddhic consciousness obtains a general idea of Buddhic principles, and gradually the experience fulfils the principles, so that they become built into his very being. The Buddhic picture becomes well recognizable. Buddhi has ceased to be that which it was at first, an empty circle, an unexplored vastness. He has travelled throughout the Buddhic world, has populated the circle, the vastness, with experience

after experience at ascending levels, until he reaches the summit and looks up to new plains, or planes of being leading to mightier summits still. The individual is ready, therefore, for another picture—that of Nirvana. But one cannot begin on another picture until the former is on the road to completion. It is no doubt possible to imagine the stages ahead, and the effort is very useful and helpful. But one must be strenuously working at the pictures one has already in hand, deliberately and with the realisation that in each case the principles must be fulfilled in practice.

The physical-body picture, the emotions picture, the mind picture—all must be on the road to completion, and each of us who reaches this stage must be hard at work on them all. Then only is it possible for us to be allowed to begin something still further. We speak of Theosophizing our lives. The word "theosophizing" covers our duty, be the centre of consciousness where it may. But at each stage we must build into our lives the essence of our highest achievement. If the causal body is the highest active principle, we must see to it that we are in all things true to the experiences of which the causal body is the custodian. We must live from that body. If Buddhi has been

contacted, we must see to it that the spirit of that Unity ensouls each thought, each feeling, each word, each deed. So with Nirvana, and so beyond and beyond. And we must remember that nothing short of Truth suffices. Our conception of Truth is not enough, however good it may be, however useful to us it may be. Facts, not theories, are required. Not, perhaps, absolute fact—that is still beyond us; but relatively pure facts, at all events. I seem to see the water of the emotions fructifying the seed of the mind so that it bursts into being. Similarly I see the water of the mind fructifying Buddhi, and the water of Buddhi fructifying the Nirvanic seed. But the water must be pure, otherwise the seed remains potential. When the potential within the seed becomes active, it sends out Light-rays of its own quality which contact, summon to its aid, the corresponding rays of Light without, and another Light-body is in course of formation. Up till that time the Light-rays from without passed through the vehicle, hardly, if at all, affecting it. But now they find response to their stimuli, and in interaction the Light-body comes into being.

I have for some time been striving to bring down into the physical brain the means

whereby translation takes place into this new field of consciousness—Nirvana. So far as I can contact the process, it depends upon the capacity to respond on the part of the embryonic atom of Nirvanic consciousness within myself. I seem to notice that these embryonic counterparts of the corresponding conditions without pass through stages of what I must call prenatal development, the birth into consciousness synchronizing with an expansion of consciousness which is the veritable Initiation itself. There is the period of sleep, unconsciousness. There is the period of stirring, restlessness, the dawn of consciousness. Then there is the period of awareness—something less than awakening, yet a capacity intermittently to vibrate to corresponding conditions without. And finally there is the awakening itself, when the embryonic atom is not merely a nucleus, an embryo, but a vehicle, a body. The Sun shines, and takes unto Himself a world, a universe. This is Initiation.

I presume that at the fourth of the Great Initiations the stirring of the life within the Nirvanic atom, due to Buddhic and other impacts, is marvellously vitalized from without by a great Act of Unification on the part of the One Initiator or His Deputy. A great

expansion takes place; the vehicle is formed whereby entry is gained into the kingdom now to be conquered. I take my abode for the first time in a Nirvanic vehicle—if the word "vehicle" be permitted—and now the task is mine to develop the senses of this new potency, just as a little child has to learn to use his senses in the physical world.

Light, of course, is the first discovery, for it is the primary, overwhelming experience. I have spoken of "lightning-standing-still". Entry into the Nirvanic world is as into lightning, blinding, penetrating, drenching. One plunges into a sea of vibrant, vocal lightning. One cannot sink, but one has to learn to swim. One does not sink, because the light within makes one buoyant. It is impossible to conceive entry into this kingdom without the warrant of the awakened light within, but were such a conception possible I realize that the only result would be annihilation. And this shows me the relatively irresistible power of this lightning-Light. I have striven to describe its glorious beauty; I might now try to describe its awful power. Scientists speak of the mighty power within the atom, and of the tremendous consequences could it be released. God tempers the Light, or we should be

destroyed. Only as self-control grows stronger, and the Path of Purification is trodden with ever more rapid and firmer footsteps, are potentialities released within ourselves, the negative within uniting with the positive without.

At this point I have since noticed that this Resurrection into the Lightning-standing-still has been preceded by the vigil of a Crucifixion. The Crucifixion and the Resurrection, therefore, are the interdependent constituents of the Epoch of the fourth of the Great Initiations, the Resurrection unsafe without the Crucifixion. And to this end are there not indeed at every stage of life these twins of Crucifixion and Resurrection? Do you not know innumerable crucifixions, innumerable resurrections, some great, some small, some tremendous, some insignificant? Are not Crucifixions and Resurrections distributed throughout life, in every kingdom of Nature? And are they not heralds of the supreme Crucifixion and Resurrection in the human kingdom typified by this fourth Stage on the Path of Holiness, at which takes place the Crucifixion of Selfishness, the utter subordination of the lower, the offering of all one is in the service of all that lives, and the consequent Resurrection into Power—Power

that may now be grasped because it can only be used to the Glory of God and in the service of His worlds? I look upon those who have achieved the Resurrection and I perceive the justificatory Crucifixions, Crucifixions none the less real and effective though some who have gone through them have been conscious of no suffering. I would venture to deny that suffering is an inevitable concomitant of Crucifixion, or at least of the final Crucifixion in the human kingdom. It is often present, but it need not be. It is not suffering that is indispensable, but offering, holding nothing back.

I find, then, that the capacity, aroused in the course of the ceremony of the fourth of the Great Initiations, to respond to Nirvanic consciousness, opens to me this new kingdom. If I am correctly describing the actual process of entry, I can only suggest that it is a matter of setting up, or rather intensifying, certain potentialities of vibration, so that all that vibrates differently falls away, or at least goes out of perspective. Do these other rates of vibration, which we may call the lower bodies, either retire into a kind of body-formula or, if they remain actually corporeal, do they lose for the time practically all save the elemental life? I start vibrating at the

Nirvanic rate, and find myself in the Nirvanic consciousness. I sound the Nirvanic note, which I heard definitely for the first time during the course of the Initiation (though an echo of it may have come to me now and then before), and the portals open to my summoning.

I shall soon find—indeed, I am beginning now to find—that it is not in the least necessary to be physically asleep in order to contact this consciousness. It may be contacted in full waking consciousness, and I am now striving to learn to do that. But if I try to examine this further step I seem to be using the physical brain in a new way, or through new brain channels. Part of the process consists in getting temporarily out of focus, out of perspective, so far as lower planes are concerned; but this is done as in a flash.[1]

[1] As experience grows, even this stage of getting out of focus is hardly noticeable. The only simile at all appropriate is that of the jelly-fish which breathes in and out, so that its body opens out and withdraws, expands and contracts. This is what seems to take place as one uses Nirvanic consciousness. One expands to outer things, contacts them in all their parts, interpenetrates them. This is how the Oneness is experienced. Can you follow me when I describe my consciousness unfolding and contacting outer things? On every plane of consciousness this can and must be done, so that one contacts Buddhically, Nirvanically, and so on.

Being very infantile in this new world I find it difficult to hold the ordinary waking consciousness simultaneously with the Nirvanic. I notice a tendency to drop off to sleep—to get out of the physical body. One curious effect is that I seem to "see" (the word does not at all suit) with the whole of myself, and not with any one organ. It is more contact than perception, more attitude than sight.[1]

I observe that Nirvanic consciousness is not a consciousness apart; it is in a supreme degree one with the world in which we live. It is all-penetrating, and in its light there is a marvellous readjustment to Reality for everything. A similar readjustment happened in a lesser degree in the case of the lower stages; and I perceive the great expansions of consciousness which mark the dividing lines between the kingdoms of nature to be similar readjustments to Reality. There is nothing in the world not amenable to the Light of Nirvana, for in it things are perceived infinitely

[1] This is the method of all planes except the physical. It is so even in astral consciousness, but it becomes more noticeable as one rises higher. And at these superior levels one learns to see every object or entity from within as well as from outside—to see it as part of one self, or rather of the Great Self in which one is now merged. This is what our author expresses in his next paragraph.—C. W. L.

more as they are than as they seem to be. The Light of Nirvana is as a great tuning-fork. External objects, human and non-human, vibrate more or less in accord. Hence it becomes far more possible for one who has heard the Nirvanic Sound to gauge the relation between the things of the outer worlds and the Nirvanic Real. Either they ring true, or not true; less real, or more real. In any case, there is unbroken relationship between all planes of consciousness. Below is a reflection, a shadow, of the above. That there is distortion is obvious, but this is because the lower has not yet learned to reflect, within the measure of its capacity, perfectly. With increasing density is increasing limitation; yet on every plane the limitation must gradually conform to the minimum rather than to that maximum density with which it began.

This brings me to a point which strikes me as of considerable importance. I perceive that the doctrine of Transubstantiation is not merely a truth in relation to the ceremony of the Holy Eucharist, but one of the great laws of Nature, one of the great processes of evolution. I perceive that all growth is in large measure a process of transubstantiation; not necessarily the abandonment of the lower, but

rather the substitution, in increasing measure, of the more real for the less real as the motive power behind or within, or shall I say the disclosure, in increasing measure, of the *substans*, of the essence, as the Life of all the shadowing forms? Taking Nirvanic consciousness as an example, I seem to perceive that in my own being a process of transubstantiation has taken place. I still live in the outer world, and go through the routine of daily life. I think, I feel, I act, I speak. I use the senses of my various bodies. To outward appearances I am not at all changed. I am as much recognizable as George Arundale as ever; and the mere superficial observer will detect no changes. Yet a transubstantiation has taken place, the old background has given way to, has become merged in, a new background. A greater reality has been substituted for a lesser reality as the ensouling power of my being.

In the case of the Bread and the Wine of the Eucharist, there appears no change of outer form. Yet the consecration causes in each the substitution of the Christ-principle for the lower principles normal to these two substances. A supreme Reality has been substituted for a relatively insignificant reality.

The Unity of all Life makes this possible, and indeed not merely possible but inevitable. The whole of life is a process of gradual transubstantiation, and in the Holy Eucharist we are given a striking reminder of this essential fact. Unfortunately, we do not generally realize that the ceremony of the Eucharist is an epitome of the whole ceremony of Life. Life is a constant process of substitution and transubstantiation, these being specially marked and sharply defined at every one of the great stages on the Path of Holiness. The expansion of consciousness that takes place at each of the great Initiations is nothing less than a transubstantiation; and the same is true of all lesser expansions of consciousness. But in each case the earlier transubstantiation must be fulfilled ere a deeper transubstantiation can take its place, leaving it potential but merged, as the lesser merges in the greater.

I notice in myself many interesting effects of the transubstantiation connected with the awakening of Nirvanic consciousness. I notice, for instance, a great clarification of issues. Many problems in life cease to be problems; the solution of them is obvious. Many things which I go on doing I do

differently, or with other intent. The whole of daily life becomes, or is to become, an offering to the newly-realized higher. Daily life must forsake the lesser Gods for the newly-perceived greater Gods. At various stages in my existence I have been living as unto this, that or the other standard. I may have been living as unto myself, my lower self; I may have been living as unto men, or as unto a code or creed. Now I must live as unto something beyond. Perhaps, to some small extent, I have all the while been living as unto the Lord—very haltingly and feebly of course. But now I must live as unto Him less haltingly and feebly because He has condescended to enter more closely into relationship with me through a veritable process of transubstantiation, which is the same as saying a process of self-realisation.

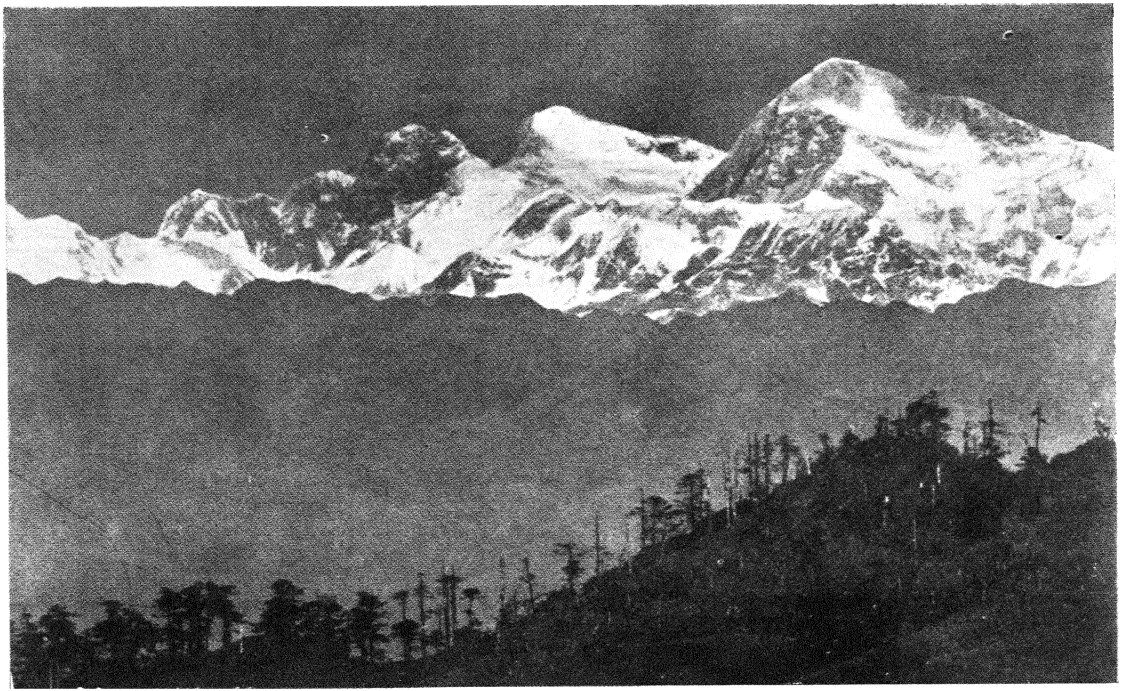
CHAPTER IV

A MEDITATION IN THE HIMALAYAS

Northwards soared
The stainless ramps of huge Himala's wall,
Ranged in white ranks against the blue—untrod,
Infinite, wonderful—whose uplands vast,
And lifted universe of crest and crag,
Shoulder and shelf, green slope and icy horn,
Riven ravine, and splintered precipice
Led climbing thought higher and higher, until
It seemed to stand in heaven and speak with gods.
Beneath the snows dark forests spread, sharp-laced
With leaping cataracts and veiled with clouds:
Lower grew rose-oaks and the great fir groves
Where echoed pheasant's call and panther's cry,
Clatter of wild sheep on the stones, and scream
Of circling eagles: under these the plain
Gleamed like a praying-carpet at the foot
Of those divinest altars.

The Light of Asia.

THE clarification of issues to which I have referred above finds valuable expression in the bringing into relief of those shadows in my



nature which have yet to yield to the Light. I know myself, I think, as never have I known myself before ; and while I am appalled at my ignorance, my thirst for knowledge, or rather for Truth, is immensely increased. Were this not so, I might well despair, for what I know is of the size of the minutest speck of dust as compared with the mighty earth. How little I really know. It is no exaggeration, indeed, to say that I know nothing. At best I have a few scraggy hypotheses, some, I trust, founded on that Reality which is the essence of my being. But how much there is to know, and how glorious the search. One feels like an enthusiastic collector of gems, glorying in the searching and triumphing in the finding. Never satisfied, but eternally hoping, and though never satisfied, still utterly content, for there is so much to do with what one has. And there is this advantage over the collector. There is nothing in the world, or out of it, that is not worth collecting. There is nothing which is not valuable experience. There is nothing which does not contain a useful lesson. So the circumstances of life are of little importance. What matters is our power to extract from them the nectar whereby we grow, the *aqua vitae.*

I here perceive once more the sharp difference between the quality of Buddhic consciousness and that of Nirvanic consciousness. The former discloses the Unity while the latter expresses it. Buddhi declares Unity, points to it everywhere, discloses the thread of Unity running through all things, and so unveils Truth. In Nirvana we begin an at-one-ment with the constituent elements of this Unity, this Truth. Buddhi discloses the Plan; in Nirvana we begin to be the Plan.

This is a very partial statement of the facts, but perhaps it will do as a broad, rough suggestion as to the general line of difference. Through Buddhi the consciousness of Truth-Unity begins to become established. In Nirvana this consciousness becomes intensified, and the process begins of tracing its constituent elements to a more transcendent cause. From the planes below, Buddhi may well appear to be an ultimate cause. Yet, standing on the Mount of Buddhi we begin to perceive yet higher peaks, and we realize with still greater awe and wonder the increasing vastness of that mountain-range of manifested life of which even the glorious Mount of Buddhi is but a lesser peak. Dwelling on this Mount of Buddhi we cannot fully perceive its nature, its relation

to the range as a whole, though from its height we may look down upon the view below and perceive great unities of landscape where we had thought there were, as we lived among them, but barriers and diversities.

I have learned much in this direction by contemplating the great Himalayan range, the physical plane range that separates the inner from the outer world, the substance from the shadow. I have sat in meditation in the midst of this mighty earthly shadow of the spiritual landscape of the manifested Logos. I have contemplated grandeur in the microcosms of the vegetation, of the plants and trees and rocks, and in the ascending macrocosms of hills, of peaks, of mountains, of ranges, unto the consummation of Gaurishankar[1] Himself. These mighty Himalayas are a living witness to, a living reflection of, the great Path of Holiness, with its glorious Buddhic and Nirvanic peaks—and doubtless of still higher summits, for aught I know. Supremely in the

[1] This was for some time supposed to be the local name for Mount Everest, but more careful research shows that this is not so. Mount Everest is Peak XV of the Official Survey, and Mount Gaurishankar is Peak XX. Some have said that Gaurishankar (which means Parvati and Shiva) is a name sometimes given to the whole group of mountains. The Tibetans call Mount Everest "The White Lady of the Glaciers".

Himalayas, and in lesser degree in other ranges, may the Voice of the Silence be heard in something of its majesty and power, sounding to ears that can hear the Word ineffable that opens the doors between the Unreal and the Real. I perceive, thus meditating, how true is it that all planes are interpenetrating. Nowhere is Buddhi or Nirvana nearer to man than in this physical Buddhi and physical Nirvana of the Himalayas. It is a marvellous experience, for one in whom these higher consciousnesses are awakening, physically to visit their counterparts carved in earthly form. My experience has been out of the physical body, yet they seem to transform me, for the time being, into a veritable Cross, an insignificant, feeble, distorted, but possibly recognizable representation of Love in Manifestation. I perceive that Buddhi reflects to us down here the Eternal, all-pervading Silence, while Nirvana opens to our ears its Voice. We catch in Nirvana a syllable of its utterance. In the far-off future we may hear a Word of Power. And then, perchance, a sentence. Some day, the mighty Language of the Gods!

This picture of the Himalayas and of their relation to these higher realms of consciousness enters strongly into my mind—not, I

think, merely because they seem to be in some wonderful way the noble physical counterparts of these mighty inner regions, but for another reason which is very elusive, though I feel I have the key to it in the dim memory of the supreme wonder of the summit of Kailasa. I can see myself—I do not for the moment notice in what vehicle—on that summit, sensing the mysterious, awesome and relentless silence, the penetrating cold, the utter aloofness, the wondrous potentiality of manifestation, from the many shades of unutterable calm and peace, the calm and peace of winter, of spring, of summer, of autumn—each different in splendour and in message, through gentle unrest to the most furious, raging and cataclysmic storm. The air is alive with latent power, and I stand awestruck, humbled, reverent, but with my own inherent Majesty revealed to me. Here at the summit there seems to be pure potentiality, relieved from time to time by manifestations of peace and storm. It is not what I see and feel that awes me, but that which is beyond all sight and feeling, that which is held in leash by the Logos Himself, that sense of irresistible potentiality which is even more marvellous than its expression.

I find myself merging in this mighty mountain-consciousness, and I find an almost terrible sense of omnipotence. It is almost overwhelming; it would be quite overwhelming did I not suddenly understand why the experience is accorded to me. I realize the intention to be to disclose to me the splendid inevitability of the triumph of evolution. Swept up into these vortices of glorious majesty, I know at once that the supreme freedom is to attain the unattainable, to be free to accomplish even miracles. But how can the unattainable be reached? Surely there is a contradiction? No; for the unattainable is only unattainable in time; there remains eternity, and to eternity all things are possible.

It is indeed necessary for mankind to be impressed by a sense of limitation, or time would not achieve its lesson-purpose. Madness lies on the road of those who would discard limitations of which they have not learned the truths; their growth is within such limitations. Yet there is a fuller growth which transcends these, a growth which all may achieve who are learning to unite their smaller wills with the Will of God, wanderers returned to the true home after experiencing the lessons of innumerable illusory homes. Thus is a freedom

achieved which, by its essential omnipotence, enables all limitation to be transcended, for who shall say to God: "Thou shalt not"? And are we not all Gods in the becoming? But only as we have learned to will as God wills can this supreme apotheosis of freedom be placed in our hands. Even in the outer world that which is unattainable to some is attainable to others. It is the same at all stages. But upon Mount Everest, upon its blinding summit, I know that even the most glorious picture I can conceive in the highest aspects of my being, utterly unattainable as I know it to be for an almost infinite period, is yet but a shadow of a still more glorious shadow, splendour upon splendour beyond count.

I have paid this visit to these mighty ones that I may have something by way of a physical illustration of the otherwise indescribable marvels of the Nirvanic consciousness. It is desired that I should bring as accurate a memory as possible down into the waking consciousness, so that I may grow a little wiser in Their Service. I must have, for the work which is and will be mine, an ever-present sense of Nirvana, to inspire, to strengthen, to guide. This infiltration of Nirvanic consciousness is necessary in order that, living in the world, I

may keep free from its shackles—most of which I should begin for ever to cast aside. It is a necessary stage in preparation for the last great journey in the human kingdom, the journey to Adeptship, a long, lonely, yet glorious road. The power of Nirvana is placed in my hands that I may have the strength, the courage, the wisdom to tread my way to this final human goal. I shall need all these, as I clearly perceive, for I am almost appalled as I learn what remains to be done. But after this experience, I know I can achieve, however unattainable the goal may seem, for the very Himalayas themselves are a living witness to the certainty of the glories that await all life.

I notice that one of the most vital lessons this experience teaches lies in the startling contrast it causes to emerge between the unreal and the Real. On Everest's summit I have been bathed in the Real. It is almost shattering to the lower bodies to endeavour to hold this Real within them. I can barely do it fresh from the experience, though later on I may be able to bring the Himalayan spirit into my daily life. I clearly see how infinitely true it is that one cannot serve both God and Mammon, and by Mammon in this case I mean all of the lower worlds that I should have outworn. If the

physical and other bodies are to retain their hold on these higher things, if there is to be an unbroken channel between the highest and the lowest, care must be taken to ensure that there shall be no clogging of these channels by rubbish of any kind, or even by things which, though not rubbish, take up valuable room, room needed for the greater realities. I must cast away the clothes I no longer need to wear. I see that I have need to readjust the values of things, that I must do things which I have not yet done, that I must not now do certain things which I normally quite naturally, and hitherto quite rightly, have done.

But this great experience of the Himalayas is not solely for the purpose of enabling me, through physical example, to bring the memory of Nirvana more accurately into the waking consciousness. It is an integral part of the very development of Nirvanic consciousness itself. Mountains are associated with the Mysteries, with Initiation and expansions of consciousness[1]; and certain parts of the

[1] "And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light."

Matt., XVII, 1, 2.

Himalayas, sacred by tradition and associated with Mighty Beings, objects of deep veneration and of pilgrimage, have, by reason of their being the abode of high spiritual Intelligences, certain magnetic properties making them eminently suitable as places in which yoga of various kinds can be performed. The Himalayas have played a mighty part both in the inner and in outer history of India, and indeed of the world. This part they still play—these age-old watchers of the growing world, these monuments of physical grandeur.

Their physical grandeur is a noble setting for the soul's awakening, and it seems to me that within such regions forces are available upon which to draw for the development of the newly unfolded consciousness. The Himalayan regions afford the purest physical reflection of those inner grandeurs which in so many other regions can find but gross distortions. Everywhere is interaction, and

"And he . . . went, as he was wont, to the Mount of Olives . . . and prayed."

Luke, XXII, 39, 41.

"And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him. And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach. . ."

Mark, III, 13, 14.

experiments conducted in these surroundings, no matter on what plane, are the more fruitful for the play upon them of Himalayan magnificence.

In almost every country in the world these massive archetypes have their humbler counterparts, where may occur some of the lesser gropings of the soul. The lesser unities may well be sensed in the lesser ranges and in such sanctuaries of Peace, on plain and hill, as are still immune from the polluting encroachments of mankind. It is still possible, even near towns and cities, to experience initiations into wider consciousness; and wherever hills and mountains are, there some of the deeper mysteries of Life may be explored. But the Himalayas are perhaps reserved for the greater transfigurations, the greater crucifixions, the greater resurrections, and may be for the greater ascensions too.

But I must return from these glories to the point from which I had to diverge—the clarification of my individual nature. I see, as I have never seen before, the qualifications for the road which I have to travel as one marked out for the pathway of the Staff.[1] Less clearly, yet quite definitely too, I perceive the nature

[1] See Appendix D.

of the qualifications for other roads. It is as if there were set before me at this fourth great stage a stupendous choice of pathways. I may not travel on a specific pathway until I have looked upon all pathways. A Great One leads me, as in a picture gallery, along them all by turn. I see their beauties and their splendours, their difficulties and their loneliness. I wonder whether I could describe their respective landscapes.

Now choose! There should be no hesitation, no doubt, no uncertainty, for has not the choice been made at the very beginning of my being? Yes; but at this supreme moment I must ring true to myself, or the conscious choice may have to wait awhile. And as I choose unerringly the only road for me, just for the moment the road itself fades out of sight, and there is disclosed to me the splendour to which it leads. I gaze at myself as I shall be, sooner or later. I gaze at myself, born, baptised, transfigured, crucified, resurrected, ascended. I know the glory of the service of the Staff; and I am immeasurably content and at peace. Long ages may pass ere I reach this splendour. Yet it is to come, and beyond it doubtless lie yet other splendours. More than enough the splendour I dimly sense in remembrance.

With the future thus unveiled for an unforgettable moment, sharply there comes to me the nature of the equipment for the journey; first, desirelessness; second, impersonality; third, truth. Above all others, those who aspire to service in the Staff must be supremely free from attachment, and this is one of the hardest of the qualifications. A member of the Staff belongs to no work, and to all work; to no place, and to all places; to no person, and to all. He desires that which for the time is given him to do; but behind this desire is desirelessness. He dedicates himself to duty, yet to no specific duty. A piece of work is given to him. He does it eagerly. But once it is finished, or he is taken away from it, he concerns himself no longer with it. He can never be so wrapped up in a particular piece of work that it obsesses him. He is a free lance, a jack of many trades. He is a King's messenger, to be sent here and there in the world and out of it, as the Will of the King may determine. He can never say: "This is my work." He can only say: "This is just now my work." He is an adaptable person, though probably not an expert. He has a chameleon-like capacity for adjusting himself to his surroundings, be these people or places, angels or

men, this world or any other world. The universe is his home. He knows no other. In his world of great desirelessness he nevertheless wills strongly to do the duty of the moment; thus he passes from desire to desire in a life of uttermost dispassion.

Then impersonality. The work he does is not his work. It is more than likely to be that of some one else, for whom, for the time being, he deputizes. The specific work of the Staff seems to be co-ordination. If I am asked what my life's work is, my reply is that I do not know, nor do I care. I can only say what my work is now; that is enough for me. Other officers may be able to answer in terms of nation, race, or world. They may be consecrated to specific purposes, but members of the Staff seem to be more in the nature of *liaison* officers, on general co-ordination duty, with emergency activity as required. It becomes of the highest importance that members of the Staff should hold themselves definitely aloof from identification with any particular duty. They must be ready to drop a piece of work without an instant's regret, for it is just as much their duty to drop work as to undertake it. This demands a high development of impersonality, all the more difficult to achieve,

perhaps, since for so long a time we have been concerned with growth through personality. At all costs, impersonality; not cold impersonality, but burning impersonality.

Then, truth. Naturally, truth, as also the other two qualities I have already mentioned, is needed on all pathways. But members of the Staff must be specially trained to recognize and follow truth no matter what the forms. They have to do more with universal truth than with specific truth. They must hold fast to the essence of truth, so as to be able to express it and perceive it through any form. I know this sounds applicable to all departments, and so in a way it is. Yet the Staff have a distinctive relation to truth, which I am here striving to express.

I perceive these three qualifications, with their very important corollary, adaptability, to demand from me constant attention. I must develop them ruthlessly, the sooner to be able to present myself as qualified for office.

Immersion in these Himalayan range-gradations stimulates in me the sense of living in three distinct categories of consciousness in my ordinary every day life in the outer world. It

is as if I had to live in three stages, or in three dimensions of consciousness simultaneously, with a fourth dimension beyond my present contact, yet subject to awareness if not to sensation. The first category is that of individuality—the consciousness prevalent in the outer world; the Himalayan plains. The second category is that of unity—the consciousness of those upon whose horizon the Sun of brotherhood is dawning; the intermediate ranges. The third category is that of universality, or relatively pure Being—the consciousness of those upon whose horizon the Sun of Oneness is dawning; the mighty summits.

In the first category the average individual lives and moves and has his being. He is limited by his causal body, and dwells for the most part in the lower mental and astral bodies. He is intent upon goodness for his own sake. In the second category we have the dawning of the Buddhic consciousness, a beginning to live on the Buddhic plane. The sense of Buddhi may come, often does come, before the first of the Great Initiations, but as far as I am aware only after this great Step is it possible normally to dwell therein. Before the first great Step the Buddhic spark remains

intermittent; after it the spark tends to grow constant and to expand into a blinding light. At this stage the individual is intent upon the good of others. He begins to cease to think about his own goodness, for that is definitely established, or will take care of itself; he cannot be other than what we call good. At least that is as it should be—as in all decency it ought to be; and for the credit of mankind it generally is. But alas! even at this stage humanity is weak; "Great Ones fall back even from the very threshold"; and we have had sad examples of downfall caused by conceit and ambition. In some such cases the defaulter recognizes his mistake, and begins humbly to work towards reinstatement; in others the effort is postponed until some future life. But always the fallen Initiate must eventually come back, however terrible may be the cost in suffering and delay.

At this stage he is preoccupied with the welfare of others, that he may fan in them to brighter flame the spark of their Divinity. In the first stage, the individual aspires to live according to the outer law. He is satisfied with revelation, whether general or specific and individual, and shapes his conduct in accordance therewith. This is

goodness. Even where revelation has ceased to satisfy, and the demand comes for knowledge, it is less for service than for the sake of knowledge. But in the second stage, revelation has definitely ceased to satisfy, and the demand comes for Truth, and for experience, less for its own sake than for the power it gives to serve. This, I conceive, is more than goodness. It is the dawning of identification with the Real, as distinguished from that recognition of the Real which marks the later periods of the first stage ; as conformity to the conventional marks its yet earlier periods. In the third stage while experience continues it begins to be transcended. There is no question of experiencing—all is a matter of being ; while service has become natural.

I wonder whether I shall be at all comprehensible if I say that there is a subtle distinction between experience and being. Experience demands subject and object. Being is the unified sublimation of both. Experience may all the time be taking place, but being may also be "taking place"—the phrase is, of course, unfortunate—when the individual is free of the realms of being, a freeman of these Heavenly cities. In one sense, truly, all

experience is being, and all being is experience, but there is a difference, a qualitative difference, a difference in fineness. Experience is being on a lower level of manifestation.

To return to our three categories, in the first stage, service is to the smaller self, and is very short-sighted and clumsy. As time passes, it becomes more intelligent and far-seeing, and the demands of this smaller self are seen to depend for their satisfaction upon harmonization with the demands of other small selves. As the second stage is entered, the happiness of the smaller self is seen to depend upon the service of others; and sacrifice grows more and more complete. In the third stage there is an apotheosis of sacrifice in a marvellous self-realization, which for the time seems complete, yet in course of time is realized to be short of completion. Will it ever be complete? It is enough that it satisfies and inspires. To reach a passing satiety-point is a *pro tanto* completion, and more satisfying even than completion, for it foreshadows the immanence of a still deeper satisfaction, a still more wonderful, however fleeting, completion. It is a completion that leads on, that becomes as it were a point which shall expand again towards, fulfilling itself in, a mighty circumference. The

brightest light is but the shadow of a still greater brilliance.

I have said that I feel I have to live in all three stages. I must not lose the stage before on entry into the stage beyond. The former must merge into the latter, for I must live to a twofold purpose—that there may be unity between me and those at that particular stage, and that God may fulfil in me His own Divinity. Nothing may be lost, nothing thrown away. There is nothing with which we have done utterly and for ever. There is nothing which is not the Life of God. I must be remembering these three stages, and must live in them all for service. I must be able to understand completely. More than ever before must I be one with all that is. No longer may I feel repulsion, or feel shocked. I must understand. The more I know of the Plan the more must I realize how all fits into the Plan. So, beginning to live from the third stage, I must still be intensely alive in the other two, not fettered by them, but helping to lead others through them. To sense the marvels of Nirvanic consciousness is not to grow aloof from one's fellow-men, but to gain power to serve them and all other kingdoms more wisely and effectively.

I want to dwell at greater length upon the third stage—the stage of the dawning of the Sun of Being. I have already described Nirvanic consciousness, which is included within this stage, as Light, with our Lord the Sun as the Universal Heart of Light as well as the physical Heart in a specific place. Yet if you dwelt mainly on the Light-idea, so that it dominated your conception, you would have only a very negative conception of Nirvanic consciousness, a very physical and limited conception. I use the word Light less to express the blinding glory (though this is marvellous enough) than to express an almost miraculous process of readjustment, an emergence of new values, of new Light upon the Path. Every expansion of consciousness involves a readjustment, at first overwhelmingly wonderful, stupendous, but later realized to need slow, steady, careful development—a renewal of every single life-constituent in terms of the readjustment, so that the latter may be fulfilled and the way become ready for a further advance, a wider expansion of consciousness welling up from the unfathomable depths of Reality. The opening of the doors of Buddhi into the Nirvanic consciousness is like the shaking of a kaleidoscope.

The existing life-picture, and even the tiniest element contributing to its making, disappear, and a new life-picture is formed, perceived to be a partial apotheosis of its predecessor, another stage towards a picture still more perfect.

I perceive this Himalayan experience to be in the nature of a kind of magnetic bath, or readjustment process. Immersion in the Himalayan atmosphere—not merely the physical but also other atmospheres—is a baptism into Reality which can take place only in the Himalayas because of the physical conditions obtaining there. This baptism is not only a descent of power but a harmonization of vehicles to the end that intercommunication may more readily take place. The physical body lying asleep at the Manor, Sydney, Australia, is linked magnetically with Himalayan conditions, and becomes itself the plains of a microcosmic Himalayan range, of which one of the peaks of consciousness is the Nirvanic. It is as if I had ascended a great mountain in this range of my Being, one of the lesser peaks no doubt, yet of mighty stature, towering far above all other summits I have so far gained. I perceive Mount Everest before me, but the summit on which I stand to-day

was itself Mount Everest for me until I conquered it.

The very physical body now knows a new relationship with the subtler vehicles, has undergone a marked change, because communications have been made with consciousness-territory hitherto unexplored and out of reach. This densest body may be likened to the plains at the base of the Himalayas. At one stage, the dense mists of ignorance almost entirely separate it from all but the lowest hills in closest proximity. It seems to be a world in itself, self-contained, with just the slightest rising beyond. Slowly the mists recede, farther off a mightier upward sweep stands disclosed, and the plains beneath are seen to be but the lowest stages of a great landscape, drawing their life from heights above, some beginning to be known, others only surmised, some unknown. Still further recede the mists, clearing away, vanishing, and disclosing step by step loftier and loftier summits until the whole Himalayan range stands revealed. The plains beneath are no longer a world in themselves, no longer a world with a range of hills beyond, no longer a part of a great landscape, but the base of a world towering into the sky, a base depending for its

life upon that which comes from above. These plains are but the feet of the Himalayas. They live from the Himalayas. Their heart is in the Himalayas. Yet upon the Himalayas shines our Lord the Sun, in Whom they live and move and have their being. Without Him, they, even they, would crumble into dust. Without Him, plains and mountain grandeurs would die and cease to be.

So is it with my body. It is but the base of my being. Elsewhere is my heart. Elsewhere is the Sun of my being. As I have ascended the Himalayas of the world, so am I ascending the Himalayas of my world, mighty peaks of which are the Buddhic and the Nirvanic consciousness. Do I still live in the plains of my physical body, or have I retired to my Himalayas? I cease to dwell in my lower bodies, in the lower ranges or on the plains. I have built myself a habitation on a mighty mountain-top. From there I live.

And yet, from another point of view, this very Himalayan experience or baptism enables me to live more truly even on the lower ranges, even on the plains. A correlation has taken place. The plains and the lesser ranges have been co-ordinated with the towering summits. The world of my being has been welded,

united, into a mighty whole. I live everywhere in infinitely fuller measure, though my heart is in the Himalayas, and in them do I renew my strength. On the lesser ranges, on the plains, I live in a world of reflections. I know them to be such, for I have seen the Substances they reflect, or at least the truer reflections. To those who see naught beyond the reflections, these are the substance and they live in them as such. But those of us who have travelled upward, inward, know them for what they are.

I can never forget the lesson of the Himalayas, even though to greater enlightenment the whole experience is but a symbol rather than a journey. It matters not. If it be but a symbol, it is the symbol of a journey. If it be a journey, the Himalayas remain the symbol of its travelling. I am living in new terms, in new similes if you will. I am linked to the Himalayas. For me they are a sacred range, portraying in rock, in earth, in grass, in shrubs, in flowers, in trees, in every part of both fauna and flora, as in a sculptured masterpiece, the reality (and, within limits, the totality) of my being. Have I knocked at the door of the great Himalayan Brotherhood, a Brotherhood linked far more definitely to the very

Himalayas themselves than would, to ordinary vision, seem possible? Microcosmically, I have conquered the Himalayas. Macrocosmically, I have but stepped on to their plains, their Outer Court; and now begins the great ascent to another spiritual Mount Everest. The Resurrection accomplished now begins the pathway to the, or I should rather say *an*, Ascension. Be all these things as they may, I am, I know, stamped with the seal of the Himalayas. Their life runs through my life. My life is absorbed in theirs. Surely am I linked with their spiritual counterparts; and it seems to me that the physical Himalayas overshadow me, guard me, guide me, uplift me. My physical body has become their child. Their Spirit broods over it, and their Life flows through it, and indeed through all other bodies in which sleep has given way to wakefulness.

CHAPTER V

SOME REFLECTIONS

> . . . the city that is built
> To Music, therefore never built at all,
> And therefore built for ever.
>
> TENNYSON
>
> *(Gareth and Lynette).*

I THINK I am justified in my surmise that in some definite way entry into Nirvanic consciousness modifies every lower vehicle from the Buddhic downwards; so that the very physical body itself is changed, and will become more so as time passes. It has, I imagine, been the same with all previous expansions of consciousness, for form is dependent upon consciousness. Outer forms are reflections, shadows, of inner realities. To us, density suggests permanence, durability, reality. From the inner standpoint, the greater the density the less the permanence, the less the durability, the less the reality. I feel my very

physical body changed consequent upon this entry into a new realm of being, but I do not know how far others perceive the change, if change there be. I suppose a clairvoyant would perceive the readjustment. Life in all its details, on all planes, becomes much more wonderful, stupendous, majestic beyond conception, for even the little things are perceived to be contributing to great ends. "Not a sparrow falls to the ground" has a new significance, for it is wonderfully true of the whole of life.

As for myself, I cannot walk in the garden, through the Australian bush on my way to work in town, without perceiving everything around me in terms of the Light I know. The growing grass, the trees swaying in the breeze, the birds singing in the air and flying from tree to tree, the insects crawling on the ground, the very earth I tread in all its varied forms of rock and mould, the water trickling down the hill-side, the very air I breathe: all is imprisoned splendour, sacred to every sense I possess. I am more in tune than ever before with the Purpose of Life. I see God working out His Purpose in all around me; and all around me is shining Light, restless, ordered growth-movement. Colour, form, place, storm, sound, stillness, time—all are

growth, because Light ever shines. It is the nature of Light to shine—a fact which down here people sometimes express in the phrase, the import of which is little apprehended—God is Love. God shines, for He is Light and Love Ineffable.

May I repeat once more that Nirvana is everywhere? We do not need to go, we only need to perceive. Heaven lies about us in our infancy, in the infancy of our evolution, but we are not alive to it. A Master may pass us in the street, embodied Heaven may pass us by, and we shall go on our way unheeding, perhaps uninfluenced, or hardly influenced. The truth may be uttered to our very ears, yet we may remain deaf to the utterance. If we have not heard Nirvana it is simply because our sense of hearing is yet too crude. If we have not seen Nirvana it is simply because our sight is yet too dim. Nirvana lies about us. Do we stop to consider what weaknesses in us, what lack of growth, veil from us the Vision Splendid? Nirvana is in the very air we breathe, in the very sights we see, in the most trifling circumstances of our daily lives. So, too, is Buddhi. So near, and yet apparently so far. Is it not worth while to strive to refine our senses that these glories may become

unfolded to our sight, to our hearing? How? There is but one way, a way most simply put in *At the Feet of the Master*, embodying the words of a Great Teacher as taken down by a pupil. Begin to live the precepts therein set forth, it is enough to begin, and soon we shall know these Heavens. Let there be none who, knowing of the way, are too foolish, too lazy, to tread it.

I have said elsewhere that to preserve my balance in the midst of the new and blinding splendours I had to know that there was more beyond even these. I am now beginning to perceive that equally must I remember the existence of the less. Only thus shall a true balance be preserved. I must not ignore time because I know something of Eternity. I must not ignore the darkness because I know something of the Light. I must not ignore diversity because I know something of the Unity. I must not ignore man because I have learned something of God. I cannot, and do not, perceive the significance of Eternity, of Light, of Unity, of God, save as I work in their respective shadows of Time, of Darkness, of Diversity, of Man and of all that leads up to Man.

Not that I feel more bound to specific growth. Were I treading the Pathway leading to the

office of Manu, or of Bodhisattva, or of Mahachohan, I should, I imagine, be coming infinitely closer to Races or to Faiths, to this world to which these Great Ones so specially belong. But because I belong to the Staff, I am called to an apprenticeship to more general functions. The opening of the Nirvanic consciousness seems to bring me closer both to the great Lord of our world Himself and to our Lord the Sun, the Lord of the Universe. Hitherto I have had to live in the world because I have grown in and through it. Now I seem to belong to this world only because, for the time being, I am sent here. Members of the Staff may be sent anywhere, to function on another plane, to serve in any world. Glorious is the service of those who are messengers of our Lord the Sun, members of His Staff. I am but the humblest apprentice in the ranks of that great body, though it may be that for many lives I have been working towards such apprenticeship. One day, in some far distant future, I shall become a wanderer through the spaces, a messenger of the Universal Will. My home will be the Universe, for I serve my Lord the Sun wheresoever it shall please Him to send me.

For the time being I am concerned with the mass, with crowds, with the larger shapings, but it does not seem to matter whether the mass be human or sub-human, whether the crowds be men or congregations in the lower kingdoms. I experience a peculiar joy in the sense of being sent, entirely irrespective of the objective. I presume the future Manu and the future Bodhisattva must grow in attachment to those with whom in the distant future they will be officially concerned. Already they are planning their peoples or their faiths, little though some of them may remember the fact in their waking consciousness. From the very moment of their consecration to office their true life's work may be said to begin.

It is, of course, the same with us of the Staff; we too have our ceremony of consecration. But our objectives are fleeting objectives, which vary as the need varies. We fill gaps; we make new pathways; we establish and strengthen communications. We start activities which their proper rulers will take over and direct; we are hurried to danger points. Any world may be our special world for the time; any plane may be the special plane of our activity; any race or nation may be our special race or nation; any faith may be our

special faith; any place may be our special place; but only for the time.

We of the Staff live in the Will of the Lord, ready for His bidding. As His messengers we go forth, returning to Him as soon as the message has been delivered, be the delivery of it a piece of work or an intimation of His Will. There is no great apotheosis of achievement for us; no mighty consummation. We may sow seed, or carry seed to the sower, or till the soil. We have no concern with the greater harvests. We shall go elsewhere, perhaps, long before fields in which we have laboured are ready for the reapers. I have said above that we of the Staff live in the Will of the Lord; but truly all live in the Will of the Lord. How then can I express the difference between one kind of living and another? The only comparison I can make is with an army. There is the Commander-in-Chief. He has his Generals and his Staff, his officers and men. All live in the will of the Commander-in-Chief, for all are carrying out his will. But you will at once see the difference between the work of the Generals scattered over the area of the campaign and that of the Staff who go out from headquarters, convey the orders, carry out the specific duties entrusted to them, and

then return. The Staff are the Commander's personal representatives; the Generals his agents. In some ways there is less responsibility upon the Staff than upon the Generals. The Generals are given an objective and possibly a general plan, but they must work out the scheme themselves. The work of the Staff is in some ways far more specific, but needs great adaptability; a member of the Staff must be able to go anywhere and do, with reasonable efficiency, anything. Above all, he must live in great detachment from his work, while wholeheartedly doing it.

A most interesting revelation lies in the realization of the way in which the great Company of Servers,[1] from ourselves upwards, forms a wonderful centre of Light—one of the Suns of the world, of which our Lord the Sun is the heart. The Company of Servers, viewed in the deeper insight afforded me by this expansion of consciousness, becomes one unity through the ages. I do not know quite what language to use, but it is as if this Company might be likened to a film-roll—part in action on the screen, part completed, part yet to come.

[1] See Appendix D.

At any particular time, such and such members are active on the physical plane, others not yet engaged, yet active on other planes—and here is where the film simile fails, for from one point of view the whole Company is active all the time on one plane or another, to the common end.

There seems to be no particular past, present or future. There is as much future in the Company as present or past. It may be that some have yet to join its ranks. Yet they are already of the Company from a certain standpoint, and are borne upon its strength. There is, of course, variation in strength of functioning, but the Company of Servers is a type apart, to which Monads seem to be attached *ab initio*, however long it may take for the type to be expressed in the outer consciousness. It is a kind of predestination, the Monad having taken the resolve.

This centre of Light—formed, as I have said, by the Company of Servers—is a process of expansion of world-consciousness. It is a world-chakra, growing in Light-intensity. It is not, of course, the only centre. There are many others, hidden as well as outer. Among the former is the true Rosicrucianism ; among the latter the great centres of Light such as Adyar

Sydney, Ommen and Huizen, such as Ojai and Benares, and other centres of lesser Light-magnitude. Whenever such a centre comes into being, an expansion of world-consciousness takes place. It is as if the whole world were passing through some kind of initiation, and the world gains an added radiance, distinctly perceptible to inner sight.

Another fact of great significance is that to be a pupil of a Master, even to be a member of a Master's School of Training, involves a very beautiful partial identification with the Master's Light. From the very moment that an individual is connected with a Master, His Light to some extent shines through him and in him. At Sonship the connection is made indissoluble, but even then the extent to which the connecting "wires" can bear increasing transmission depends upon their strength and purity. There may be a feeble glow or a radiant brightness.

The Masters have explained to us that those of us, with whom They have definite and special links, are in a special measure not only Their representatives in the outer worlds, but also representatives of our Lord the Sun, consecrated to shine for Him and in His Brightness in the outer darkness. Surely this is a

great and wonderful privilege for us, bearing a solemn and heart-searching responsibility all the more stupendous when we know in some slight degree Who and What He is. As He causes His Light to shine alike upon the just and upon the unjust, the saint and the sinner, the poor and the rich, the weak and the strong of all Faiths and Nations, so must the sunshine of our own power, compassion and understanding reflect His glory upon all. We must be all things to all men. We must be in the outer worlds a faint reflection of that which makes Nirvana so glorious a witness to the Love of God. As the Sun is all things to His universe, so must we little suns be all things to ours.

It is not what men do to us that matters. It is not what circumstances are to us that matters. All that matters is what we are to them. Circumstances and people may frown upon us, but we can only smile. Circumstances and people may persecute us, ridicule us, despise us. We can but give our goodwill in return. We must be all *good* things to all men. A hard task for those who have been accustomed to return evil for evil, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a blow for a blow, an injury for an injury, a frown for a frown. But we have learned otherwise. We have

ceased to have the power to injure. We can no longer hinder, we can but help and serve; for this is all we care to do. The taste for satisfying the lower nature at the expense of others has departed from us. We can no longer feel hurt. We can no longer feel annoyed. We can no longer feel shocked. We are concerned with what we can do for others, not with what others do to us—that is their business. Let those who know something of the great Hierarchy strive to understand more clearly what that Hierarchy is, and of Whom it is composed. Let each member of the Society meditate upon these greater Suns in the firmament of the world, unifying himself to the utmost of his power with Their Radiance. Let each member feel this Radiance surging through him to the outer world, lifting him into a divine and clear-cut, over-flowing ecstasy as it floods his being.

Let us learn to reflect, as occasion demands, the varied glories of the Seven Rays. The members of Their Staff of workers must be able, no matter to what Ray they may individually belong, to become channels for any colour in the great Spectrum of the Rays. We must sense the respective variations of these Rays on the theme of the Light-Splendid

and in the thrill of our response realize how glowing must be the varied life which we should radiate into the world.

But may I say here that it is utterly immaterial to what Ray we belong? From one standpoint each of us, everything, belongs to all the Rays. As for the dominant Ray, the less we bother about it the better. I have noticed that most people who talk about their Rays are very little on any Ray. While we speculate about ourselves, we remain small, for we are the centre of our circles. When we forget ourselves and are lost in the work, then we shall cease to speculate and wonder, for we shall know. Leave yourselves alone and devote yourselves to others.

I notice as a fact of very considerable importance that each individual is a reflection, however feeble, of the line to which he belongs, or on which he happens to be working. Every teacher, whoever and wherever he may be, simply because he is a teacher, becomes in some degree an image of Those Who serve the Teaching Ray, though too often this image is distorted and barely recognizable, sometimes even worse than a distortion. As every Christian priest is a humble representative of the Christ, so is every teacher a humble

representative of one of the Great Heads of the Teaching Department of the world. This privilege is his because of his office, and apart from all question of his worthiness. To be a teacher is to be a representative of the Great Teachers. The responsibility cannot be escaped any more than the privilege.

The same principle holds good in all departments. Those who rule, the statesmen, the politicians, all engaged in statecraft, are humble representatives—worthy or unworthy—of the Great Rulers. They may desecrate and degrade the office ; yet the office remains, however besmirched. The same principle holds good in all sub-divisions of departments. All this is in compliance with, in expression of, the great Unity of all Life.

One thus becomes able to see the Real in every one, however much the unreal may interpose. One perceives the Truth despite the camouflage. Every teacher, by virtue of his office, is a Christ in miniature ; but how little most of them realize their possibilities and responsibilities ! Many teachers are careless and perfunctory, many are incredibly cruel ; yet upon each of them, as a teacher, the Christ-Light sheds its glory, however blankly unaware of this privilege he may be, however little the

glory may shine through, be the windows of his soul open or closed. He is part, for the time being at all events, of the heavenly Teacher, the embodiment of the Teaching Principle in life.

Applying this fact within a more circumscribed area, we realize that those who are members of a Church dedicated to some special Teacher are part of His body corporate, and thus partake of His essential nature. For example, those who are in communion, through the dedication of their church, with St. Alban, are thereby linked to him, become members of his family and may draw upon his life. He is the father of that Church-family. It becomes very much worth while, therefore, to acquire all available authentic information about St. Alban, his lives, his line of work, his special characteristics, and so on. As members of his Church it becomes easier for us to contact him, and to develop in our own natures the glorious qualities existing in his. There is very much more in the dedication of a Church to a Saint than appears at first sight. There is also very much more than appears at first sight in becoming a teacher or a politician, in taking an office of whatever kind which involves responsibility to the outer

world. And not only is the link made with an Elder Brother, it is also made with His angels, and with all other grades attached to the same department. The fact that we belong to this Earth links us in a wonderful degree with the Earth-Life, makes us representatives of the Earth-Spirit, of the Earth-consciousness. It would be well if we related ourselves more definitely to the larger life around us, so that we might become more effective instruments, less obstructive channels. Have you ever meditated on the life-force you draw from our very globe itself, from its various constituent elements of earth, air, fire, water, and so forth? Inter-relationship, interaction, everywhere. Our very existence modifies the world, and qualifies it according to our natures, just as we ourselves are creatures of the Earth, its children.

CHAPTER VI

THE AWAKENING OF NIRVANA

Day !
Faster and more fast ;
O'er night's brim, day boils at last :
Boils pure gold o'er the cloud-cup's brim,
Where spurting and suppressed it lay,
For not a froth-flake touched the rim
Of yonder gap in the solid grey
Of the Eastern cloud, an hour away :
But forth one wavelet, then another, curled,
Till the whole sunrise, not to be suppressed,
Rose reddened, and its seething breast
Flickered in bounds, grew gold, then over-
flowed the world.

BROWNING

TRYING to describe what I must call down here the Nirvanic body, the only word that comes to me in substitution for "body" is radiance. One might describe the Buddhic body as a Star raying forth its glories. But transition to Nirvana seems to spread my Star out so that there is neither centre nor

circumference, but only dazzling radiance. If I could look upon this brilliance from some para-Nirvanic region I should be able to discern its limitation, not so much a spatial restriction, as a limitation in the radiance-scheme and the radiance-intensity. This lustre of mine, indescribably glorious though it is, is obviously only in the becoming, and when I compare it with the radiance of my seniors I perceive, first, that in it the Nirvanic Light is only in embryonic co-ordination, in what I may call rough outline ; and second, that the very Light itself, dazzling though it be, lacks the scintillation which time and growth alone can give. I notice that Those who are Masters in these Nirvanic regions, and have fulfilled its seven great fields or planes, shine with the glories of still greater splendours, their Nirvanic radiances being suffused, interpenetrated, with higher effulgences which I can sense but shall take long ages to achieve.

In some ways, from the standpoint of the lower planes, the word transcendence is more appropriate even than radiance, for it indicates the going beyond every single limitation worn by the planes beneath. Time, space, form—these are transcended. They have ceased to manifest, though remaining in potentiality, or

I could not assume them as I descend, as I pass outwards. I am well aware that such transcendence suggests an annihilation of all that on the lower planes seems to make life real—the ego, the personality, the individuality. If these are gone, what remains? Is Nirvana, after all, the annihilation which some philosophers have thought it to be?

My answer is that all these things, however substantial they may appear down here, however much they may seem to be our ultimate foundation, are themselves but reflections of a nobler *substans*, themselves rest on deeper foundations still. Individualized Divinity exists in Nirvana, and doubtless in para-Nirvana too, even though its reflections as time, space, form and as the lower individualities we know as ego, personality and individuality, are unmanifest, potential. We have to learn that individuality does not necessarily demand description in terms of time and space and form as we know these in the outer worlds. There is individuality in other terms, in terms of Nirvanic time, Nirvanic space, Nirvanic form—the archetypes of lower time, lower space, lower form.

I find myself tempted, as I experience more, to speculate that individuality, the condition

to which we cling so furiously in the lower regions, becomes far less precious and vital as we pass beyond the more Mayavic planes. There is something that matters far more than George Arundale, a something of which George Arundale at his very best is but a feeble reflection. Inevitably, we personify. Even Theosophists personify. Many of us probably think of the Logos Himself as some King or Person. We cannot bring ourselves to think of the disappearance of individuality, for we then come face to face, because our experience stops short, with annihilation, and evolution will then have been in vain. So far as I am able to judge, much disappears which in our lower bodies we would fain cling to, just as it is a wrench to lose the causal body as we enter the Buddhic plane. But the loss of this body troubles us not at all on the Buddhic plane, and the loss of the Buddhic body troubles us not at all on the Nirvanic plane. Why? Because we approach more and more closely to the Root-Seed of all bodies, which is none of them, but out of which each body proceeds as the Root-Seed sends downwards its shoots of Life. Already, at the Buddhic level the Monad for the first time since individualization from the animal

kingdom occupies, at all events for a moment, one of its dwellings. At the Nirvanic level the tenancy of the lower bodies begins to become more permanent, until at last the Monad and its lower vehicles are one. Before this, the Ego himself has, of course, led the way in occupation, shedding at last what to many has seemed a strange indifference. But the Monad Himself replaces His temporary substitutes as these higher regions are ascended, and takes the place of all that hitherto has seemed so utterly indispensable. George Arundale at his best is but a shadow of that which sent George Arundale forth. George Arundale may come or go. He ceases to matter; and I am learning, as I make Nirvana my home, to treat George Arundale even at his best as but a means to an end, a tool which has had its day, may still have its day, but can quite well cease to be at any time. This is an amplification of my earlier experiences in Nirvana, but I am by no means sure if I have made myself intelligible. In any case there is no loss, but always gain. The ladder remains even though I cease to use it. We do not kick away the rungs by which we have ascended. And as the lower planes are to the subtler planes above, so is the Nirvanic plane to the planes above it. It

must surely be the densest region of the series of regions that stretch beyond it. Even I can perceive that the lowest sub-plane of Nirvana is dense (inappropriate as the adjective seems in reference to Light) as compared with the higher sub-planes. I can only repeat that individualized Divinity exists as definitely in Nirvana as, indeed more definitely in Nirvana than, it does down here. When we transcend *our* time, *our* form, we do not subtract; we add.

It is as if an individual living in a small cottage were to become the king of his country. While the cottage remains his world, kingship would seem a limitation. He would be lost in it. But when he is ready for kingship, when he has ceased to be his cottage and only uses it, then he loses nothing by becoming king, even though the cottage-time, the cottage-space and the cottage-form may have been transcended. He can even live in the cottage if he so desires, at all events from time to time, but he is no longer limited by it. Has he lost his individuality by becoming a king? The difference between the kingly individuality and the cottage individuality is as the difference between individuality in Nirvana and individuality below. Becoming king he has added to himself,

however much the cottage may have been subtracted. To the cottager there is a subtraction ; to the king there is addition.

Let us follow for a moment this simile of the king. Consider the difference between the king and the cottage—the greater power of the king, his greater splendour, his wider vision, his deeper understanding. The king lives in a time and space and form different from those of the cottager. He can do far more in his time. His time is fuller, more potent. His area of movement is far wider. He contacts so much of which the cottager remains necessarily ignorant. His form is so different from that of the cottager. He has many forms, he has to be many things to many people, he has many functions in his State, all depending upon his kingship. Many things he does which the cottager does. He eats, drinks, sleeps, works. But he does all these things differently, and to greater ends. The cottager may live to eat, but the true king eats to live. The king lives in another world, though both he and the cottager may be in the same world. One set of values and standards for the king ; another set, even with regard to the same things, for the cottager. The things precious to the cottager may have

little value to the king, just as the things which the king cherishes may mean nothing to the cottager. The cottager looks upon the world with a cottager's eyes. The king looks upon the world with the eyes of a king. The cottager, as the poets so often tell us, would not exchange his lot with that of kings, because he would not be happy in the wider sphere—he knows but limited happiness. But the king—the true king—would have little hesitation in exchanging his lot with that of the cottager, because he could be as kingly in the cottage as in the palace, as kingly in the cottage-state as in the Nation-State over which he rules. The greater can limit itself far more easily than the less can expand. The king can be kingly anywhere, and that is all that matters to him. He depends upon himself. The cottager depends upon his world. It is this transition from dependence upon outer things to dependence upon the kingliness within that marks the upward growth. From living in a world, I become a world. And some day I shall transcend even this.

I should like at this point to emphasize the fact that on entering Nirvana we absorb it far more than Nirvana absorbs us. It might be thought that, once bathed in the glories

of Nirvana, an individual would practically become its slave, leaving it with difficulty, effecting a veritable annihilation of the lower worlds so far as regards any joy of living in them. It might be thought that he would become Nirvana-absorbed, ever longing for its bliss, never happy until and unless immersed in it. My own experience is different. It may, of course, be that as I become more familiar with Nirvana I shall become more absorbed in it.[1] Yet from the very beginning of contact with Nirvanic consciousness there has been an overwhelming eagerness to convey something of its reality to the worlds in which I have grown so long. To contact Nirvana is like a debtor suddenly finding himself with unexpected means to liquidate some of his debts to his creditors. We owe much to the outer world. We have lived in it for ages. We have grown in it. However much we transcend it we still remain its debtors.

God Himself is paying his debts of long ago in the Divinity-infused systems and universes

[1] As a matter of fact I do find that I am becoming more and more absorbed in Nirvana, but this is just the same as saying that I am becoming more and more absorbed in life, not by any means only life in this world but equally life in all worlds, life in all planets and suns and stars. I am more alive in all worlds, as much in the physical world as in any other.

of which we are part. Is it irreverent to say that through these very payments He Himself grows, as we grow through ours? Indeed, it is only as we are eager to pay that the wherewithal comes to us for payment. I could not contact Buddhi save as I am seen to be realizing my true relationships in the lower worlds. I could not transcend Buddhi save as I am seen to be dedicating the power of Buddhi, as I have already been dedicating the powers below. No transcendence of the lower is possible save as it becomes consecrated again by us to the ends to which God consecrated it aforetime. We must remember His consecration of His Life to a Divine unfoldment or apotheosis. We must transubstantiate, even as He is ever transubstantiating: which, put in simple language, means that we must live in terms of Brotherhood. Brotherhood must be substituted for the smaller self.

My longing, therefore, is to share Nirvana, not to cut myself for ever off from external surroundings, but to carry Nirvana everywhere, no matter where. I could not dare to enter Nirvana otherwise, or I truly believe I should indeed experience some form of annihilation. Its Light would burn me up. Only can I enter Nirvana as I am ready to recog nize

Nirvana for that which Nirvana truly is, and as Nirvana is ready to recognize in me a neophyte who has performed an act of consummation on the lower planes and who, therefore, has won the right to further power which he may be trusted to use as so far he has used all power entrusted to him. There must be in me the dawning of the essential Nature of Nirvana, which is not annihilation, but an infinitely deeper radiance, an infinitely deeper wisdom, power, love. Hence, given such dawning, safely may I enter, for I shall be entering only to live more abundantly.

Nirvana has been born in me. It is a condition of consciousness. I cannot express Nirvana in aught that is less than Nirvana; but I can suggest it in the denser matter beneath, I can re-mould forms into closer approximation to its formless majesty. I can remember Nirvana, and I can live my daily life as unto Nirvana, pointing to Nirvana. And this is what I must do, for I can only know Nirvana myself as I lead others towards it. But when I say I must lead others to it, I ought to make it once more clear that Nirvana is already in them. As I have already said, Nirvana is not somewhere in space. It is a state of our consciousness, of the consciousness

in every individual. What I have set forth in these pages is waiting to be set forth, either in similar or in other terms, by all. Time is, of course, needed. The seed does not become the bud at once. But it is only time that is needed. A short time for the wise, a long time for the ignorant; a short time for those in whom the sense of the Unity of Life is growing strong, a long time for those who have still to learn many lessons in the outer world.

Let none, however, imagine that in any sense perfection is needed for entry into Nirvana. It is not a state of perfection. I am able to reach its lowest stages even though there are still many fetters which bind me to the human kingdom. It is a state of being, and all states of being, since they are limitations of the One, must necessarily be imperfect, partial. That it is a state nearer perfection than all lower conditions of consciousness is, of course, obvious. That there is greater unfoldment in it is true. Nirvana is a condition of indescribable bliss and power. But it is by no means the ultimate, and he who reaches it has not long left the preparatory school of life.

At the first of the Great Initiations he finally completed the earlier stages, and now at the fourth great step he is equipped,

with the aid of the powers of the second and third steps, for more serious service, for real leadership in the outer world. He enters Nirvana with fetters still about him—still with certain limitations and weaknesses, incompletions. Side by side, if I may use the expression, there dwell together the Nirvanic consciousness and all the other modes of consciousness of his being. But the lower modes tend to merge in the higher mode, for his attention is towards the Light. He ceases to be the slave of these lower modes, for he takes up his abode in the higher. No longer masters, these lower ranges become servants, and so higher and higher does the gradually liberated individual climb, sub-plane after sub-plane, in the kingdom of Nirvana. Little by little this consciousness, itself unfolding, transmutes all lower forms, till at last the individual's waking consciousness is an unfolded Nirvana, and all other modes are active as they happen to be needed. This, and certainly much more than this, is the normal life of the Masters of the Wisdom.

CHAPTER VII

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

I felt through all this fleshly dress
Bright shoots of everlastingness.

HENRY VAUGHAN

I SEEM to have seen as in a flash a picture of the future of our Theosophical Society. In my higher bodies I am sure I know not only its general future but many of the details. But I find it extraordinarily difficult to hold the picture in the waking consciousness. I presume the reason for this is that the picture I have seen is the expression of the Will of God, of the Logos, in this particular connection, is a flash of the Lightning-standing-still, and almost defies translation through a brain unaccustomed to such transmission. The Nirvanic wave-length is almost too subtle for my brain machine, and most is lost in the process of transmission.

I see the Society in terms of the Eternal Now as a certain Light-quality, being

independent of the existence of the Society since the Society is only the Light in a particular mode of manifestation, an incarnation of this Light. The Society is the expression of a great Light movement—with no beginning so far as I could see, and no end. I see this movement as I see the light-houses of Sydney Harbour, now shining in the outer world, now not shining ; and you will realize my difficulty in holding the picture in the physical consciousness inasmuch as the various periods of manifestation of the Theosophical movement in the outer world are visualized as one sees the flashings of a light-house which sends out periodic beams of light. I see many such flashes, presumably occurring at the close of each century, temporarily illuminating the darkened world ; and between each a period of slowly lessening darkness. Thus the first impression down here is darkness—light—darkness—light—darkness—light, with the darkness wonderfully, though very gradually, shading into the dawning of a Day of the Lord, upon the threshold of which stands the world at the present time.

Can I dissect this flash, analyse it? Only very generally, with my feeble powers. I seem to see the Theosophical Society move more and

more in the direction of concentrating its efforts upon the insistence of goodwill in every department of life. The first Object remains the vital Object. The second and third Objects remain an integral part of the Society's official principles, but the second Object seems to have to a certain extent fulfilled itself, while the third forms the special objective of the Esoteric School of Theosophy. The Esoteric School of Theosophy is, of course, in fact the heart of the Society, for it is the link between the Society and the Great White Lodge, but it seems to become a more homogeneous activity even than at present, having its separate head and organization, though working in closest harmony with the Society itself. The Esoteric School of Theosophy is the school for discipleship, while the Theosophical Society has become far more part of the outer world in the sense that its members are engaged in active work in every field of life, some working in one way, others in other ways, perhaps opposed ways—but all maintaining in splendid comradeship the binding Unity above the most conflicting diversities. Members of the Society are noted for their enlightened citizenship, and their utterances are heard with respect, because it is known that they are both selfless and wise.

They are the world's insurance against wars and quarrels of all kinds. Every member, wherever he may be, is an accredited ambassador from the Prince of Peace to his surroundings, and has the respect due to a wise elder. The more members of the Society begin to take an active part in the world's affairs, the more are people attracted to its membership who themselves are active ; with the result that the Society becomes a picked body of idealistic, practical, efficient pioneers who get things done because they really mean business. Through the efforts of members many superstitions die, though some die a lingering death. The superstitions of meat-eating, and wine and spirit-drinking die. The superstition of racial superiority dies. The superstition of class or sect irreconcilability dies. And the new policy is a policy of intensifying capacity rather than of levelling differences, it being held that the differences will harmonize themselves if capacity is encouraged and directed to unselfish ends. Little by little the whole world commits itself to brotherhood, and the Theosophical Society, still existing, becomes a great world-wide organization supplying every brotherhood movement, every Nation, every Faith, with its leaders and most

stalwart protagonists. The common membership of them all within the Theosophical Society is the world's guarantee against disharmony and conflicting aims.

I do not see most of us in all this. We have done our work. We belong ever to minorities and to beginnings, to experiments, to forlorn hopes, to unexplored forests, to uncharted seas. We have made these things possible, and this is what we had to do. Some of us are in the Great Community. Others are engaged in other duties in this and in other worlds. Thus other people have taken our places in the Theosophical Society, or at least the places of many of us; and the Society at this period represents the world's acknowledged best. I think some former Presidents are in turn Presidents of the Society again, thus preserving the hierarchical and apostolic succession, but the majority of the members are people who to-day are not quite ready to join.

The difficulty in seeing all this lies in the fact that the whole impression is one single impact, and this impact has to be dissected. For example, I seem to contact an impression of the Presidents of the Society from the beginning up to the period I am describing.

But I can only get quite vague impressions as to who they are. There seems to be a kind of President-Man, just as we speak of the Heavenly Man. The Presidents together constitute a special type of force, and each individual President takes office because he or she brings the particular quality of power needed at the moment. The choice of President is quite a complicated scientific affair, involving the manipulating of many forces; so, too, is the choice of Vice-President. The Society has as far as possible to reflect the Great White Lodge in the outer world, and its chief officials play an important role in such reflection.

I see the Society as the Light-Nucleus of the forces radiating from it to energize Brotherhood-activity throughout the world and on many planes. The Society is a direct channel for the Power of the Great White Lodge, in many ways the most direct channel, but the Power of the Lodge flows through the Society into many brotherhood movements. The Society is the heart of them all, and the inspirer of most, whether they recognize the fact or not.

I see in the picture our Society leading the way to Brotherhood more and more directly. The Society begins to become an acknowledged

power in politics, in religion, in education, in industry, in social life generally. More and more, members of the Theosophical Society take practical and active part in the world's affairs, and as time passes some of them occupy prominent and responsible positions. The Society stands behind Brotherhood in all phases of life, and while it is not committed to any special form of activity or belief, and there are members belonging to various kinds of organizations and modes of thought, still the common membership causes a strong comradeship even amidst diverse and superficially antagonistic activity, so that members of the Society are always able to bring together opposing factions when the opposition becomes injurious to the community as a whole.

Lodges of the Theosophical Society tend to become Community Centres, self-contained, on the outskirts of towns, but with centres of activity within the towns.[1] In this way, the various Lodges become practical examples of Brotherhood, which the world admires, thus causing a great increase in membership. The members begin to become the Society's best advertisement—which all are not to-day—and the outer world, for this very reason,

[1] See Appendix E for a more detailed description.

gravitates towards hygienic and humane living. As I have already written, meat-eating, "sport" of the kind in vogue to-day, vivisection, industrial quarrelling, religious antagonisms, international disputes—all tend to disappear, partly because of the direct activity of members of the Society, partly because of the indirect example of community living, and partly because the Society becomes a very potent network of Brotherhood, out of which the world is at last unable to escape. The members of the Society become efficient sentinels against anarchy, revolution and all other forms of destructive unrest.

I see the Society being led into closer contact with the outer world, and fine egos born within its ranks, attracted thereto by the immense possibilities which membership of the Society offers. Membership of the Society becomes much more valuable and valued than ever before. It confers a distinct *cachet,* and egos with a purpose realize that both educationally and as regards a starting-point for the delivery of their message, to grow up within the Society's influence is a very great asset. There seems to be almost a rush to be born of members of the Society, especially with the wonderful ideal of

Motherhood which the Society does so much to foster.

I see subsidiary activities very virile, very vigorous, definitely subsidiary in the sense of paying reverent homage to the Mother-movement, yet sturdily independent at the same time, and contributing to world-progress a vitality all their own. Interestingly enough, I see all these things in terms of colour and sound.

Liberalizing and unifying movements are at work in every religion, through the instrumentality of the Theosophical Society; and I see other movements in other Faiths taking their place side by side with the Liberal Catholic Church and the Hindu movement—both very powerful organisations—within a great League of Religions, an activity which takes the place of the World-Religion, for which the world was found, and still remains, not ready.

CHAPTER VIII

THE IMMANENCE OF LIGHT

Paris, March 7th. It was dark and rather cold, I was gloomy and walked because I had nothing to do. I passed by some flowers placed breast-high upon a wall. A jonquil in bloom was there. It is the strongest expression of desire: it was the first perfume of the year. I felt all the happiness destined for man. This unutterable harmony of souls, the phantom of the ideal world, arose in me complete. I never felt anything so great or so instantaneous. I know not what shape, what analogy, what secret of relation it was that made me see in this flower a limitless beauty . . . I shall never enclose in a conception this power, this immensity that nothing will express; this form that nothing will contain; this ideal of a better world which one feels, but which it would seem that nature has not made.

DE SÉNANCOUR.

IT is an interesting experiment to look out of the window upon the scene without and gradually to withdraw from each object seen the various associations with it on different planes. Things are, apart from that which

they appear to be. Every object I perceive has a being different from my conception of it. It is all I think it to be, or it may be less than I think it to be, in so far as I attribute to it that which in reality it does not possess (to this extent I am very truly misunderstanding it); but it is also far more, for it represents a principle of life, a law of evolution, the nature of which, at my particular level, I can only very partially grasp.

As I look out of my window upon Sydney Harbour, or upon a certain portion of it, withdrawing my habitual associations, the first thing that strikes me is the unity of it all. Everything belongs to everything. Everything needs everything else, is the comrade of everything else. I see that part of the harbour which is open to my gaze as a tender whole, almost crying out against the vandalism of man which would resolve it into independent, unrelated, too often antagonistic elements. Why should everything live against each other when in fact everything depends upon everything else, and can only truly grow as this inter-dependence is recognized and lived? I perceive everything as helping to fulfil everything, as contributing towards the purposefulness of everything.

The vessel on the sea helps the sea to grow and the sea helps the vessel to grow. The houses dotted upon the slopes help the land on which they are builded, just as the land helps the houses. The tiniest pebble resting upon the beach is necessary to the beach, is necessary to the mighty sea which seems to treat it so haughtily, so cavalierly, so contemptuously. How could the earth grow without its earthworms, its vegetation, the creatures that live upon it? How could all these grow save with the co-operation of the earth? I perceive entities everywhere, living entities, with more or less consciousness. The ships, the houses, the trees and shrubs and flowers, the very pebbles—all are entities. The whole harbour is one great being, yet various parts of the harbour are beings too.

I see all in these terms, each entity with its own small life, yet enfolded in the one Life Universal, a part of the one Great Whole, each dependent upon all the rest. I see each helping to fulfil the others. But at this word "fulfil" I stop, and I notice that these various things do not by any means always fulfil each other, though they ought to. Sometimes they profane and degrade each other, as, for example, when an ugly building is put up, when the

open spaces are desecrated by hideous erections of any kind or by the loathsome litter of man's careless selfishness. Whenever and wherever one part lives ruthlessly at the expense of another, then there is no fulfilment, but rather a debasement in which all, by very reason of the enfolding unity, must needs share. I find that I begin to grow sensitive to these defilements. Apart from the fact that they defile and degrade me, they also jar me and sadden me, for I know how glorious a thing is that mother-Unity to which they are so unfilial.

Now all this is consequent upon the withdrawal of all lower associations and the substitution of Buddhi, a veritable transubstantiation. But I think I can go a step further and view my landscape in terms of Nirvanic consciousness. At the Buddhic level it is the marvellous inter-relation that strikes me. Let me blot out this sense of inter-relation and seek still further within. I make what is to me a most interesting discovery. Expecting to perceive everything in terms of light, I find that everything resolves itself into power-units. I perceive the power in everything, and am almost appalled by it. I hardly notice the forms. These do not seem to matter at all. They are trivial compared with the ensouling

power. And then I suddenly begin to notice that this power is imprisoned Light.

Here I must use a phrase which I hope is intelligible—it is the only phrase I can find: Light unconscious is veiled in matter that it may become Light self-conscious; and the power I so strongly perceive is the irresistible potentiality of the Light self-conscious veiled as Light unconscious. Power and Light are, therefore, one and the same thing; but the transubstantiation from Buddhic to Nirvanic consciousness seemed to emphasize Light as Power, perhaps because the first thing I noticed was the splendour of that Light which is slowly but surely transcending its imprisonment in all things. I saw victory everywhere, everywhere the Light unconscious growing into self-consciousness in those various stages of intensification which we call kingdoms of nature.

Perceiving these rays of Light-Power in all things, I notice a great harmony-in-the-becoming. At the Buddhic level of interpretation I should have described this harmony in terms of inter-relation, each object essentially fitting in to every other. At the Nirvanic level of interpretation, I describe this harmony in terms of all-pervading Light-Sound, so that the

object loses its objectivity and shares in a universal subjectivity. At the Buddhic level objectivity remains. At the Nirvanic level objectivity disappears, and archetype takes its place. At all levels of interpretation one notices, of course, the growing harmony—not yet without marring discords, I fear. But at the Buddhic and Nirvanic levels, the harmonies are infinitely deeper—in the one case the underlying unity being disclosed, while in the other the power that makes for unity is opened to our gaze. Below the Buddhic level diversity is more apparent than unity, but it is through living amidst that diversity that perception and realization of unity becomes possible. We cannot afford to do without diversity, for diversity, if we only knew it, is the most wonderful testimony to the unimaginable splendours of the unity. And happy are those whose vision is keen enough to enable them to perceive the unity notwithstanding the distractions of diversity. He who has reached the Buddhic or Nirvanic quality of consciousness can never lose the unity, be the diversities what they may. I feel able to say, then, that as I look out of my window I perceive imprisoned within every single object in every kingdom of nature the unity of Buddhi, the

power of Nirvana, however embryonic and unconscious. And I know that the very imprisonment itself is the gift of God that the unity may some day realize its inherent power to burst all bonds. The One Life, with all constituent elements, pervades all things and there is no region, however lofty, but has its reflection in all things.

Let me add here a few words regarding Light-Power. Curiously enough, while I notice Light-Power in all things and a unity of Being enfolding them, each specific object seems like a puff of power within a vast cloud of power. The word "Ray" hardly seems adequate to express the facts, for "Ray" suggests travelling, while in Nirvana there is essentially Being. Objects seem to be cloud-bursts (the word "cloud" is of course unfortunate) within a mighty cloud-burst which is the act of manifestation—a microcosmic puff within a macrocosmic puff. To put my thought in another way, all objects looked at from the Nirvanic level seem to be explosions, microcosmic explosions within a macrocosmic explosion—explosions which give the sense of pulsations. We might even go one step further and regard objects as innumerable beats of the Universal Heart. I wonder

whether you are at all following my line of thought? It is so difficult to express, but I am endeavouring to reconcile individuality with universality. I perceive, of course, individuality, but individuality is a mode of universality; true enough, yet not the whole truth.

There is nothing which is not Divine. We tread Divinity when we tread the earth. Whatever we touch, whatever we see, whatever we hear, whatever we feel—all is Divinity. My landscape, therefore, is renewed in the new Light. Every object of which it is composed reveals a hitherto hidden Divinity, and hence has new and richer values. These objects, the ships, the little boats, the ferry-steamers, the buildings, the lamp-posts, the shops and the objects for sale in them, the trees and flowers, the furniture in the rooms—all are now instinct with new meaning, and therefore with new purpose, with new inter-relationships, with a new message, with a new appeal, with a new comradeship. In each there is much more relativity yet no less individuality than before, and, what is more, I seem able more definitely to discern the extent to which each reproduces or distorts its archetype, for there is nothing without archetype.

It may be that in terms of eternity there is no distortion ; but in terms of time there often is, and we have the task of readjusting the distortions which are noticeable from the point of view of the time-world. Hence I am now more able to judge what is out of harmony and what is harmonious. Each object is a personalization of Light-Sound, the personalization being the translation of Light-Sound in our lower worlds. Each object is a sun in humblest miniature, a tiny star, a world, a universe. Each object is a microscopic harmony. But each object, too, may have its elements of darkness and of discord, in which its true light and sound-values are thwarted. It is interesting to me to listen to and observe objects and to endeavour to sense their respective Sound and Light-formulæ, their various vital notes and mystic chords. I am just at the beginning of this, and can at present say no more.

I realize (1) that the Nirvana I am beginning to know at the fringe, is itself not merely a reflection of para-Nirvana, whatever para-Nirvana may be, but also a reflection of a cosmic Nirvana, of which it is the direct representation ; (2) that this very Nirvana is the reincarnation of the Nirvana realized by our Lord the Sun on His own upward Path in a

period prior to the being of our system. I realize that every plane has its cosmic archetype or counterpart.

I should like at this point to advance the theory that countless ages ago our Lord the Sun travelled more or less the same pathway that evolution is treading to-day. Step by step He ascended, bond after bond was burst asunder, until the spark became the Fire, the heart of which is that physical orb we call the Sun. And as the ascent was made the sum total of the experiences on each plane was, as it were, memorized in terms of potentiality, so that as He grew He built into His Being the seeds of a Universe like unto the Universe of which He was then a growing fragment. He became Life self-conscious, but was composed of Life in innumerable layers below self-consciousness. I, George Arundale, am partially self-conscious, but I am composed of life—of microcosmic universes and worlds—more or less unconscious. The process of growth is a process of internalization, of in-breathing. The process of fulfilment is a process of externalization, of out-breathing. It is this function which our Lord the Sun is performing, so far as this universe is concerned, and the out-breathing, the externalization, consists in fanning

into flame the innumerable sparks built into Himself during the course of His own evolution æons, myriads of æons, ago. Our Lord the Sun is doubtless also internalizing, but of this I know nothing. We, too, Suns in the becoming, are building into ourselves the material of which some day we shall be Suns, upon which some day we shall shine as the Sun shines upon us all to-day. Where we are, He has been. Where He is, we shall be.

Every plane is thus an externalization of a potentiality which itself is the gathered fruit of experience and consummation. Our own contacts—in whatever manner—with the various planes of nature are not merely for our personal growth, but that in a future beyond time there may be in us the potentialities of a Universe, that as our Lord the Sun is to His, to all His kingdoms, so may we become to ours. Having become centres, radiances, transcendences, having breathed in, after the great out-breathing, there will take place once more an out-breathing to circumferences, or in other words, a manifestation. As our Lord the Sun breathes, in mighty life-giving breaths, so shall we. Such seems to be the law of all being, at least of all which we can conceive, for to us being is pulsation. It may be that

there is being destitute of this quality, but this does not seem to be the case in the schemes we know. Though we naturally postulate unmanifestation as an apotheosis of in-breathing and call it pure being, still, ourselves manifest, we cannot conceive of the unmanifest without the potentiality, the seed, of manifestation. We therefore postulate great in- and out-breathing, and while the attainment of self-conscious Divinity may be the apotheosis of in-breathing we look for a succeeding out-breathing, as night follows day.

Having in my own nature begun a transubstantiation of consciousness, the Nirvanic consciousness slowly beginning now to be my positive *substans* instead of negative as hitherto, I proceed to follow up the process by an endeavour in the direction of effecting a similar transubstantiation in regard to the outer world. I say "an endeavour," for it is just the halting and feeble beginning of a wonderful transformation leading in the distant future to the consciousness of the Adept. First, I obtain a general impression of the world viewed Nirvanically, and immediately all ugliness disappears—the pathway merges in the goal, processes are perceived in terms of their results. I idealise, and therefore realize.

As a general statement, I may say that Nirvana is a consummation, an apotheosis, an archetype, of world conditions. It sounds strange, perhaps, to bring into juxtaposition the words " consummation " and " archetype," yet Nirvana is both. It is both seed and flower —seed in all things, flower in a few, flower in all things some day.

In the outer world I am living amid innumerable conditions, circumstances and events. I invest this outer world with Nirvana—somehow I seem able to do this—and I perceive the Real. The real-in-the-becoming, which is the outer world, has become the Real, for I have touched it with the magic of the Eternal Now which is the Time of Nirvana. Immediately I perceive a new significance to the phrase: " God is Love." He is infinitely more than Love. He is ourselves. And every circumstance of the world, in every kingdom and on every plane, is a fulfilling of God, however we define this word, an unfoldment of Himself, of His Nature. We are of His very Substance, and the Holy Eucharist, whether in Christianity or in any other Faith, is a veritable remembrance of this supreme Truth, a sounding of its ineffable Note amidst the discords of growth and becoming.

I substitute God positive for God relatively negative, and the world stands self-explained and justified. I have found God in everything. Nothing is there which is Godless, nothing which is not Godlike, may I say "Godfull"? I can conceive an entirely different system of evolution in the course of which growth takes place without friction, without the swinging process, if I may so call it, between the innumerable pairs of opposites—good and evil, right and wrong, and so forth. But I realize that the methods and processes enjoined for our own particular evolution are perfectly adapted to such ends as I am able to grasp. Whether they are the shortest possible cut to these ends I do not know. One presumes that what is best has been chosen, and it is futile, not to say presumptuous, to speculate further. May I at least say that Life is essentially lazy, takes the line of least resistance, never does with trouble what can be done with ease, the most elaborate complications being in all cases the simplest available means to reach the desired end? Life is marvellous, but it is more than marvellous, it is simple; and you and I grow near to Life, approach God, as we substitute simplicity for the confusion, fuss, and elaborateness of

that modern artificiality which is called civilisation.

When I am able to say, not merely as a pious belief or hope or yearning, but as an experience, that God *is* Love, I have effected a transubstantiation, that is to say, I have emphasized Reality. The world thus becomes far more real in every circumstance of its being. Essentially, of course, all is real, for all is God. But there are, if I may say so, gradations of God, from the unconscious to the self-conscious. The transubstantiation I effect is to substitute comparative self-consciousness for unconsciousness, or, to put the process another way, to assert the self-conscious in the unconscious. I realize here how useless words and phrases are, for in the Light of Nirvana there seems to be no difference between the two. But if I have to try to explain out here, I can only say I assert the Real in the midst of the unreal, or I know the unreal as the Real.

Hence, Nirvana interprets; in the dark places shines its Light. Elsewhere I have written of the new values Nirvana gives to things, of the readjustment Nirvana effects. Let me here put this fact in another way. I am beginning to live in a new world which is

nothing more than the old world "realized". I am beginning to "realize" everything, so that nothing seems out of place. Everything seems inevitable—gloriously inevitable. I have used that phrase before with regard to the future, but it is equally true of the present. We cannot do without a single circumstance of it.

I feel that this must sound very strange in view of the terrible condition in which the world finds itself to-day. Yet nothing is terrible unless we linger when we should proceed. Nothing is terrible until we cling to it long after it has served its purpose. Nothing is wrong until we have outgrown it. Evil is but a worn-out garment we still wear; and it is worth while to remember that what one has done with, and should cast off, may well be a new suit of clothes for another. In world-terms, Truth grows, however much there may be Truth absolute and eternal; and we must grow with Truth. Truth unfolds; and we must unfold with Truth. We cannot, must not, wait. We must not be sluggards. To stagnate is to decay, and the only really terrible thing in the world is the decay which is stopping still, for that is the beginning of falling back.

Other decay of a noble kind, there is, which is but the reverent putting aside of that which has served its purpose. It is the former which is dangerous; against it the whole world must be on guard, lest it repeat the bitter experience of the past.

In the light of the Nirvanic consciousness I perceive, as I have said, the Real in all things. The changing world has become a world changed; and I know that nowhere is any waiting inevitable. There is nothing so hardened that it can no longer move. Strange as the statement may sound, the great war itself helped to loosen the hardnesses, though I am not prepared to say that they could not possibly have been relieved in any other way. In any case, the very Coming of the World-Teacher is proof that the world has the ears to hear Him. Does not His moving among mankind effect a transubstantiation for the whole world? A marvellous tangible Real will thus be substituted for the infinitely lesser Reals with which the world has for so long had to be contented. He takes their place. The very writing of this phrase thrills me, for it embodies the wonderful fact that He re-enters into an intimate relationship with us He comes

down among us, entering into our little world, taking His place *in* us, substituting Himself for our own higher selves, which is the same thing as saying that He raises us far beyond our normal selves, or that He purifies our higher selves and draws the lower into accord with the higher. In the Light of Nirvana, I see how all this is brought about, for He is embodied Nirvana, a Nirvana which the world shall be allowed to see and hear and know. Nirvana becomes tangible !

For all things I perceive the Nirvanic counterpart, but this perception has more meaning to-day than it has had for many centuries. The world is about to enter upon a new spring-time. Already I perceive the tiny shoots of Buddhi forcing their way through the denser layers of the lower planes ; and, looking forward into the far distance, I see how these little shoots shall become buds, finally blossoming into the Buddhic flower. We must water these shoots by treading the Path of Righteousness, or they will decay back into unconsciousness.

Nirvana shows me, as I have never before seen, the potentialities within the actualities of these worlds of ours. I know what the world can do. But the world must not wait.

It must move, and all men and women of goodwill must help it to move. Utopia is waiting to enter, but the world must open its doors; and I am utterly clear that there is nothing in the world which is an insuperable barrier to this opening. I seem to observe the world as from a great height. Its needs are very great. It cries aloud for help—the cry that the Lord has heard and answers with the words: "I come." I see good promise for the future, if only the world's leaders will lead it from the pursuit of separateness, whether individual, or class, or nation, or sect, or race, to the pursuit of Unity and Understanding.

Nirvana is not yet for the world, but for many the Sun of Buddhi should not be so very far below the horizon, and already the roseate colours of its dawning should begin to dispel the night of separateness. Have you ever stood upon a mountain watching before dawn for the rise upon the world of our Lord the Sun? Have you stood awestruck at the miracle of a world of darkness being transmuted into a world of softest colour? Have you marvelled at the glory disclosed in every part of the landscape by the magic touch of the Sun's rays? Have you noticed how beautiful is the re-awakening of everything into life different?

Have you watched the glorious innocence and yearning of all that is, in its dawning? The great English mystic, Thomas Traherne, gives beautiful expression to the dawning of childhood on the physical plane; almost similar words might be used for childhood on any other plane, for the first awakening of higher consciousness. Traherne tells us:

Certainly Adam in Paradise had not more sweet and curious apprehensions of the world, than I when I was a child. All appeared new, and strange at first, inexpressibly rare and delightful and beautiful. I was a little stranger which at my entrance into the world was saluted and surrounded with innumerable joys. My knowledge was Divine . . . My very ignorance was advantageous. I seemed as one brought into the Estate of Innocence. All things were spotless and pure and glorious; yea, and infinitely mine, and joyful and precious. I knew not that there were any sins, or complaints or laws. I dreamed not of poverties, contentions or vices. All tears and quarrels were hidden from mine eyes. Everything was at rest, free and immortal. I knew nothing of sickness or death or rents or exaction, either for tribute or bread. In the absence of these I was entertained like an Angel with the works of God in their splendour and glory, I saw all the peace of Eden; Heaven and Earth did sing my Creator's praises, and could not make more melody to Adam, than to me. All time was Eternity, and a perpetual Sabbath. Is it not strange, that an infant should be heir of the whole

World, and see those mysteries which the books of the learned never unfold ?

The corn was orient and immortal wheat, which never should be reaped, nor was ever sown. I thought it had stood from everlasting to everlasting. The dust and stones of the street were as precious as gold ; the gates were at first the end of the world. The green trees when I saw them first through one of the gates transported and ravished me, their sweetness and unusual beauty made my heart to leap, and almost mad with ecstasy, they were such strange and wonderful things. The Men ! O what venerable and reverend creatures did the aged men seem ! Immortal Cherubims ! And young men glittering and sparkling Angels, and the maids strange seraphic pieces of life and beauty ! Boys and girls tumbling in the street, and playing, were moving jewels. I knew not that they were born or should die. But all things abided eternally as they were in their proper places. Eternity was manifest in the Light of the Day, and something infinite behind everything appeared ; which talked with my expectation and moved my desire. The city seemed to stand in Eden, or to be built in Heaven. The streets were mine, the temple was mine, the people were mine, their clothes and gold and silver were mine, as much as their sparkling eyes, fair skins and ruddy faces. The skies were mine, and so were the sun and moon and stars, and all the World was mine ; and I the only spectator and enjoyer of it . . . So that with much ado I was corrupted, and made to learn the dirty devices of this world. Which now I unlearn, and

become, as it were, a little child again that I may enter into the Kingdom of God.

Is it not at the dawn that we perceive the beauty even in the things that otherwise we should call ugly?

So have I stood upon the mountain of Nirvana. So stand I still, and watch the world once more stirring into Buddhi as the Lord Christ dawns again upon it. Only stirring, perhaps. How long before the awakening? Ah, who can tell! Yet we may be thankful that dull sleep has given way to dreaming, and that out of that dreaming comes a stirring upon the threshold of awakening. I see, of course, that this is not the first of such. Many Suns have dawned upon us, and step by step the world has grown. There have been the great and glorious dawns, as when Great Saviours have illumined us. There have been the lesser stirrings, as in the periods of renaissance, as towards the close of every century since the twelfth.

This brings me to a further perception of the Theosophical Society as one of these mighty stirrings which the Saviours alone can give. I see the Theosophical Society as the living witness of that Buddhic consciousness which the world has yet to know, but towards which,

in part consciously, yet for the most part unconsciously, it yearns. The Society is, as it were, the touchstone and nucleus of Buddhi in the outer world, reflecting Buddhi or Brotherhood, pointing the way to Brotherhood in its three great Objects, awakening Brotherhood in the world in innumerable forms, subsidiary to the supreme archetype as disclosed in the first Object. Those who are beginning to be ready for Buddhi inevitably turn towards the Society as its physical-plane symbol and expression. Their faces are turned towards the dawning; in the Theosophical Society they find its Herald, and they add their voices to the Voice of the Dawn calling the world to awaken to a newer day.

I perceive the Society itself to be an Himalayan range, with its peopled plains in the outer world, with the lesser hills of the Esoteric School, and with the ascending peaks and ranges of discipleship culminating in those lofty Supermen Who constitute its inner Light and Life. I see what the Society has to become—a channel for Buddhi, for the Buddhic consciousness to the outer world. I see that while the true standard of righteous living is elsewhere than among mankind, yet the Theosophical Society reflects that standard, and

that our movement is intended to become a world within the world—a world from out the future, dwelling in the present as a living example of a partly realized ideal. The Theosophical Society must become a World-State in miniature, and its members citizens thereof. That which we exhort the world to do we must ourselves be doing. In every field of life our Buddhic consciousness must be growing active. We must stand for Brotherhood in daily life, in religion, in politics, in industry, in education, in international relations. I have sought to convey a glimpse of what this means in " The Australian Section: A Vision " (See Appendix E), for that which I have written there of Australia I conceive to be true of every Section and of the whole Society. Our precepts are valuable, for they constitute an unveiling of Truth which the world has forgotten or needs to know. But example founded on these precepts is far more valuable, for it is better to see Theosophy than to hear it, as it is better to live it than to see it.

If we could only live *our* Theosophy in the world, accustoming the world to suffer it gladly, the time might come for the world to be ready to suffer gladly our Masters to live

Their Theosophy in the world. But to a world yet in the twilight the sunshine can come safely only by degrees. Let the Theosophical Society be the dawn heralding that glorious day when in the very outer world itself the mighty Circle of Brotherhood shall be complete. Within the Society there must be no such problems as those which disfigure the world. Within the Society-State there must be comradeship in all things, be the diversities of custom, opinion or outlook what they may.

The Theosophical Society is greater than its members, for is not the shadow less than the substance, the sunshine less than the Sun? Never for an instant may we forget that our primary allegiance is to the Society itself apart both from any of its members or from any of the beliefs which they may hold. We must learn to recognize that no identification by the ignorant, of certain specific doctrines with the Society as a whole, makes such identification a fact. It is as if some people passed before a great mansion and, seeing through an open window a room with a green carpet, green furniture, green wall-paper and green docorations generally, declared that the whole house was entirely green. In the mansion of the

Society are many rooms, each with its own colour, but all within the house and belonging to one community, though some members of the community live in one room and others in another.

The Society is a great receiving-station for Brotherhood from the inner worlds, transmitting it now specifically in the shape of definite Truths, now generally as vitalizing force. Through the latter Brotherhood-spirit in mankind is stimulated and finds expression according to individual temperament and place in evolution. All are welcome to membership in whom Brotherhood is stirring, no matter what form it takes. The Society stands for Brotherhood unqualified, encouraging all movements, all individuals, sincerely dedicated to Brotherhood, be their objectives what they may. It is doubtless possible to define Brotherhood. Each individual should be able to define it more or less satisfactorily to himself; and on every plane of consciousness there is a definition appropriate to the plane, as I have suggested in my definitions of Buddhic and Nirvanic consciousness. But the Society offers no definition. It asks from each his acts of Brotherhood, leaving him to define it as he will, and as he can.

I have had to write this, because it seems to follow from my Nirvanic meditation upon the Society. Standing, as the Society stands, for Buddhi in the outer world, it is, as it were, a kind of half-way house, between Nirvana (and all that is beyond Nirvana), between the ideal such as we can grasp (and all that may lie beyond our grasping), and these planes of nature upon which normally dwells the outer world. The half-way house must by no means become an obstacle to the passage of the Sunlight of Nirvana to the plains of the outer world beneath, even though in travelling through the denser medium the rays must needs grow less intense. We must never forget the fact that the Society is but this half-way house, is merely a channel for that of which Brotherhood itself is a modification, for there is more than Brotherhood before us, though we may have yet to attain Brotherhood. Thus only can we hope to keep unsullied our great ideal.

I notice particularly that the problems of our outer life are non-existent in Nirvana. Nirvana may have its own problems; it has certainly none of ours. I do not know

whether I am able to distinguish between a problem looked at in the light of Buddhi and looked at in the light of Nirvana. In either case, every circumstance that contributed to the making of the problem becomes resolved or transmuted. It ceases to be a problem, for the problem-constituting elements have disappeared. These elements are the products of the separative forces, of ignorance, and can find no place in the higher worlds. The selfishness which is the root cause of them all has burst its bonds, having no further cause for being. The world needs to be full of problems upon which we may exercise God's gift of choice, discrimination. But less and less do we need to choose deliberately as choice through experience becomes automatic, instinctive, or, let us say, intuitive.

In Buddhi we reach the Unity. In Nirvana we are the Light which is the heart of Unity, the essence of its being. The world thus becomes in many ways a far simpler and easier place in which to live. The solutions of the problems are so obvious, however hard it may be for the world as a whole to accept them; and not only are they obvious, but simple, easy to bring about, provided we are big enough to grasp them firmly. Therein

lies the difficulty, of course. All that leads to Light is right. All that leads to darkness is wrong. It is no longer a question of creed or colour, or race, or nationality. All is perceived in terms of greater or lesser Light. "Let there be Light," we echo. "More Light!" we exclaim, with Goethe. The growing consciousness of Nirvana intensifies the Light of our being—the very world itself is the brighter for the entry of one of its children into Nirvana—and darkness of whatever kind grows increasingly unnatural. We rule out black even down to its apparently most insignificant expressions, as for example in the case of ink or dress, and we only use it *faute de mieux*, under protest. There is nothing black either in Nirvana or in Buddhi. Life is much simpler than it appears. Complexity is the muddle of ignorance. The more we know the simpler life becomes. Nothing is difficult to do if we want to do it. It is not difficult to do even if we have to do it alone, against the crowd, provided we want to do it. Where there is the will there is the way.

It is interesting to look at a special problem, let us say, the industrial problem. What is the solution? Obviously, comradeship, complete

fellowship between the two classes of workmen, whom down here we call employers and employed—rather distorting terminology since the employed employ the employers as much as the employers employ the employed. In these higher regions there is this fellowship. Nothing else could exist. In the lower worlds the difficulty is to obtain it. In the higher worlds it is impossible to avoid it. The solution of the industrial problem lies in the two sections working together as one, as they will have to work sooner or later. That is easier said than done, we are told. Yet it ought to be done as easily as said, for it is the final truth. With brotherhood on both sides it would be an accomplished fact. With brotherhood on neither side it becomes impossible. No compulsion from without will ever bring it about; no legislation or arbitration of any kind. All these are compromises, bargainings, between truth and falsehood, and cannot last. There must be the urge from within.

CHAPTER IX

A FURTHER READJUSTMENT

LOOKING down upon myself from the viewpoint of Nirvanic consciousness, I am most interested to perceive my first impression to be that of watching a dynamo churning out power, but with only part of the machinery at work. I see enormous potentialities still to be unfolded, only certain powers being actually in operation, and even these only partially. I am amazed at the possibilities—I should rather say at the certainties—of the future, but I think I am even more amazed at the fact that I am an integral part of our Lord the Sun Himself. I notice, I think, an unbroken line of connection between the Sun and myself, as between the Sun and all things. This connection is to all intents and purposes a physical connection, for although the connection is a Light connection, yet that very Light is composed of particles, and it exercises quite

appreciable physical modification upon my physical body as well as upon my other bodies. Light has weight, mass, momentum. I am therefore a nucleus of force within larger nuclei of forces, within a Heavenly Man, within the Sun Himself, even as He is a nucleus of force within a still larger system. From one point of view, therefore, the whole system of which the Sun is the heart is a solid body with every part as closely connected and inter-related as the various parts of our physical bodies.

Hence, I am a solar system in miniature, with a central sun, with planets, with all the appurtenances—in embryonic miniature—of the solar system as we know them. Do I reproduce in myself the movements of a solar system? Do parts of me revolve round a central part of me? Does the central part of me revolve? At all events the whole of me revolves, for at least I revolve with the world of which I am part. But if I do not mistake, there are these various revolutions. I seem to see myself as a co-ordinated mass of intricately revolving worlds, reminding me of numbers of Catharine-wheels in a fireworks display. I seem to see the various great centres (chakras) revolving in co-ordinate motion round a central heart which does not seem to be the heart-chakra but a

chakra invisible, perhaps the Monad, if we can at all call the Monad a centre. If it does not sound flippant, I should like to say that I see myself as a kind of glorified fireworks, part of still more glorified fireworks, with the Universe as a supreme display of fireworks on an unimaginable scale. But these fireworks are continuous, and do not splutter out.

What astonishes me more than anything else is the potentiality, marvellous beyond words, of even the minutest fragment of myself. I gaze upon the heavens with their myriad constellations, and I see all these reflected in each and every atom of my being. There is enough potentiality in each and every atom to build all I see around me. An atom, universe as it is with its central nucleus round which revolve its constituent planets, is an epitomized universe, containing within itself every single element needed for the development of every plane and all kingdoms of nature. This may sound an absurd exaggeration, yet it is true—obviously true—for every atom is imprisoned Sun-Life, that Life which brought our Universe, with all its wonderful complexities, into being.

Look into the Heavens and perceive God's glories. Gaze at yourself and it is as if you

were looking at a reflection of these vastnesses. Indeed you are looking at their reflection. There is as much an astronomy of the human body as there is an astronomy of the stars, and from the Nirvanic level of consciousness it is clearly possible to perceive the essential identity between the astronomy of the microcosm—myself—and that of the macrocosm—the heavens. I certainly perceive Nirvana-potentiality in every single atom of my being, and I perceive the fact that the centre of my system is awakening into Nirvanic potentiality, so that the atoms of my own being may be clearly distinguished from those of one who is not developed to this extent. Further, the emanations from me, my radiations, my pulsations, my "puffs" shall I say, acquire perceptibly added brilliance on this account, as they did at all lower stages of expansion of consciousness. Pursuing this fact to its logical conclusion, every good thought, good feeling, good word, good action—goodness being, of course, a relative term—adds its own brilliance both to the individual as a whole and to his radiations. The whole world is the brighter (perceptibly so to consciousness at the necessary level of sensitiveness) for the tiniest goodness, that is to say for the tiniest increasingly

positive harmonization, in any part of the lesser will, with the Will Universal.

I perceive that the awakening of Nirvanic consciousness at the centre means a raising of the level of consciousness in every part of my being. Every part takes a step upward, or inward, in consciousness. There is begun a new refinement in each body and in every part of each body; and not only is this true, it is also true that the whole world makes an appreciable advance in consciousness-expansion, and there is more Light, more Unity, in its smallest component atom. Obviously this must be so, in view of the intimate inter-relation between every part, of the identity of all life amidst the innumerable diversities of its appearance. Hence a service to any part of the world, however microscopic, is a service to the whole world, and *vice versa.* This truth applies equally, of course, to disservice.

I seem to perceive a new meaning for the phrase: "Mind your own business." I have a whole universe to look after, in which I am the humble representative of our Lord the Sun. I have as much as I can do to look after this world of mine, especially when I remember how potently it affects all other worlds around me. It may be that it is my

duty to assist for a time one or more worlds in my vicinity, in which case I must mind their business a little, but with the very greatest respect, since I can know so little of these other worlds, so much less than I know of my own—and how little I know of my own! My main, but in no sense selfish, preoccupation, therefore, must be with my world, with its purity and brilliance, so that it may become a joy in itself, and therefore a joy to other worlds.

The new conception of life—of my own life, and of all other life—that I gain through the perception of myself not only as a world but as a universe of worlds, forms, indeed, a most fascinating avenue of investigation. I do not think I at all understood the impressive significance of the relation between the microcosm "I" and the macrocosm without until I looked upon both in terms of Nirvanic consciousness. This significance discloses itself in two outstanding directions. First, the glory. Second, the responsibility. As for the first, I hope I have been able to convey something at least of the glory of Nirvana even in the halting descriptions I have ventured to give in the preceding pages. With regard to the responsibility, this comes to me in the realization that

as the Sun is the Glory of His Universe so must I learn to be the glory of mine. Indeed, I am a Sun in microscopic miniature. I am the Sun of my being. I am the humble representative of our Lord the Sun. I look up towards Him. I see a little of that which He is to all the worlds. And I see that as He is supremely to His Universe, so must I be supremely to mine. We are all His Suns, with universes to look after and gradually to develop, as He has so gloriously developed His. The universe without is the embodied promise of fulfilment for all smaller universes which form its being. I look up towards the Sun, and visibly before my eyes shines, as from the future, the supreme and inevitable glorification of myself.

The Sun is multiplying Himself in us. And do I not know that beyond our glorious Sun there are Suns more glorious still? What limit is there, then, to man's unfoldment? He has ascended from the infinitely small; he shall ascend to the infinitely great. The Heavens about us stand guarantee and witness. Every law astronomy postulates with regard to the Universe as a whole runs equally in every part. There is not a single function in the larger Universe which has not a counterpart in the

smaller. And when we read of the way in which a Universe comes into being, let us remember that we have a description—utterly inadequate, of course—of some Great Being-become-God entering upon the mighty Sacrifice, itself from another standpoint the beginning of a new expansion of His Being, of guiding to self-conscious Divinity all parts of His Nature which fall short of His complete Self-consciousness, no matter at what stage of lesser consciousness they may be. God multiplies Himself by every part of Himself and the result is God self-conscious in every part. Every seed becomes a perfect, eternal Flower, as well as a petal of a Flower yet mightier.

The simile comes to me of the oak and its acorns. God is as the oak, and every part of Him is an acorn. As each acorn grows, so does the oak grow; and some acorns are at one stage of growth, others at other stages. There is an oak-acorn universe, and as one series of acorns transcends the purely acorn stage, another series takes its place. Thus, there is an endless series of growings at all stages, and the oak-father himself grows as his externalized life grows, for however much acorns may fall here and there, be blown hither and thither by the winds, the one life

unites parents and children, and the growth of each reacts upon all the rest. And by and by certain acorns grow into oaks, and themselves give forth acorns. The oak becomes a forest. Our Lord the Sun becomes a forest of Suns. This is the oak's fulfilment of himself. This is God's fulfilment of Himself. This is our fulfilment of ourselves. The oak has his seasons for acorn-bearing. Has God His seasons, too? Or with God is the process of manifestation continuous, an endless stream of life issuing from His Being?

Nirvana seems to be drawing so near to me, or perhaps my centre is so definitely, however slowly, shifting to the Nirvanic plane, that I find myself more and more relating every phase and feature of the outer world to its Nirvanic archetype or counterpart. I have come to the conclusion that there is nothing in this world, or out of it for that matter, which is not in some degree a reflection of Nirvana. The outer world is after all Nirvana objectified, Nirvana densified, the shadow of Nirvana. Every plane below is the reflection of the plane—of all planes—above.

The objectification, the densification, the shadow, the reflection, may be a distortion, but only, I think, as I have suggested elsewhere,

when it has fulfilled its purpose. There is no absolute distortion, only relative distortion, and by the word "distortion," therefore, I must mean a form inadequate to the level of unfoldment attained by the particular life which may be in question. That which is inadequate is wrong. That which is adequate, or perhaps more than adequate, is right. As I write this, I wonder if there are any things in the outer worlds which are fundamentally wrong, or if at the worst they are inevitable, given certain conditions which themselves, it may be, ought not to exist. Take, for example, a liquor shop. On first consideration, I am inclined to decide emphatically that a liquor shop is fundamentally wrong. But then I ask myself whether a liquor shop may not be the only place, under existing circumstances, in which certain people can forget that which they ought never to have needed to know. Life is very grey for many people. From time to time they must needs forget its greyness, if they cannot alter it. The public house temporarily solves, in a ghastly manner, the problems of life for many people. And to this extent liquor shops may have once been "right". But need they be right any longer? Ought they to be right

any longer? We are still at a very low level of evolution if they are still right. For my own part I think they are supremely wrong. Woe unto those of us by whom this offence comes! But until we are able to provide something better to take its place, the public house remains. Do I hurt my readers' feelings, or shock them, when I say that the public house does represent a pitiful attempt of man to reflect that glorious self-realization after which each one of us yearns in his heart? Shame upon us that we should suffer so hideous a distortion to dwell in our midst; far more shame upon us who tolerate it than upon those who are driven to it.

This brings me to the point I want to make. Each one of us must constantly strive to live according to his own highest standards, and not according to conventional standards which represent less than the highest, at least so far as regards those to whom Theosophical teachings appeal. The need for this is borne in upon me very strongly at a time when standards which have hitherto sufficed me must no longer suffice. The conventions of my old world are not the conventions of the new, and I must change accordingly. Is it not true to say that the conventions of the

pre-war world are not the conventions of the post-war world, or ought not to be, and that the world needs to change accordingly? So it is with me. The pre-Nirvanic world is utterly different from the Nirvanic world, and there is hardly a detail of life which does not need readjustment, because everything is revealed in a new Light—literally in a new Light.

I am immensely struck by the extraordinary difference in the values of words. The dictionary is a new book to me, for every word in it has—I was going to say a new meaning, but certainly a new power. Words are power-universes, power-atoms, and they are exploded by being uttered. The power in them is released and goes on its errand. Have certain words evil errands, and other good errands? In some is there the power that makes for righteousness, while in others there is power that makes for relative unrighteousness? I have yet to examine the question. In the meantime I am almost appalled at the power of language and at the gravity of careless usage of words. Until we know what we do, may be we shall be forgiven; but when we begin to know what we do, there is no justification for a forgiveness

which means either that because the will behind the utterance is so little potent, therefore the result is more or less negligible, or that counter-balancing forces are introduced to neutralize the effect. In the one case there is forgiveness from within, in the other forgiveness from without.

For the time being I am occupied in watching the jars made both by my own utterances and by what I hear from the lips of those around me. Certain words jar me terribly. I must be careful to avoid them. I wonder why they have not disturbed me before. But the fact that I can be thus hurt by myself I take to be a good sign. It means that from time to time I am able to live outside my lower self, and to compare the larger with the smaller; and it also means that I can understand, as a matter of pure personal remembrance, how other people are not affected by that which only a short while ago seemed by no means discordant to me; nor must I expect them to be shaken, or be impatient of their not being upset, simply because I happen now to be agitated by something which has hitherto not shocked me at all. I see clearly that there is little use in reaching Nirvanic consciousness unless such attainment stimulates at-one-ment.

True attainment, in whatever sphere or department of life, is deeper at-one-ment, and reality of achievement may be measured by increased strength of unification. That which definitely promotes union is accomplishment, that which does not is not true gain at all, whatever the outer world may call it.

Not only does this new Nirvanic element profoundly modify my appreciation of language, but equally my appreciation of everything else, of people, of landscape, of cities, of animals, of business, of pleasures. The new element of Nirvanic consciousness enters into all things, or I should rather say is suddenly perceived in all things as well as in myself, and the effect is of looking upon a world one has never seen before. As I have already suggested, the languages I know are new languages, for the words now possess hitherto unperceived connotations and relationships.

So do books. I do not think the modification of consciousness is anywhere more marked at present in any case than in books. I went the other day into one of our largest bookshops, and I found myself amidst a weird babel of sounds. Every volume was vocal. In each book was its author speaking his message—in some cases powerfully, clearly, upliftingly ; in

other cases, at the other extreme, vaguely, purposelessly, vulgarly, perhaps, often sordidly, or sometimes with a well-chiselled form distressingly empty of purpose. Each work was a sound-scheme, often a jarring sound-scheme, but sometimes a beautiful symphony. Each book, too, was a light-scheme, a dull light-scheme, a lurid light-scheme, a bright, clear light-scheme, now and then a gorgeous light-scheme. I was not able to follow up this discovery, but I knew that books are alive, that some are in the savage state, and thence there is graded ascent in evolution to God-books, such as the Scriptures, and others less than these, yet great. I cannot pursue further this fascinating theme, but it will be realized that books are now no longer mere tomes, they are living beings, for which their creators have serious responsibility, which speak and shed their influence around them. A book in a room is a factor with which we have to reckon ; a library is a potent force.

One of the most awe-inspiring effects flowing from the awakening of Nirvanic consciousness has been in connection with the celebration of Holy Eucharist. When I had the honour of celebrating this great Sacrament in the Church of St. Alban, Sydney, for the first time after

beginning to make my voyages of discovery in the realms of Light, I found that an extraordinary change had taken place. In any case the ceremony is most impressive, but I have never before been so conscious of its power, and I endeavoured to trace this newly-awakened consciousness to its source. It seemed to me that this marvellous Sacrament is taking place at all times on all planes. When we celebrate it down here we are merely for the time being bringing ourselves into conscious relationship with its eternal processes, becoming mere unobstructed channels for its expression in and through ourselves. Clearly, I think, the act of celebration on the physical plane is a distinct gathering together of the essential forces of the Holy Eucharist, so that they affect in special measure the surroundings in the midst of which the ceremony takes place.

But I also saw that the Holy Eucharist is the expression of a Law of evolving Life. Hence Eucharistic processes are ever at work, as are the processes of all other great Sacraments. Sacraments are sacrifices, expressions of the eternal and continuous sacrifice of God. We ourselves, and all that lives, are embodied acts of God's sacrifice, and the Eucharist is a mode of the growth of all things. I was

wonderfully conscious of this at every moment of the celebration. In the first place, I was clearly conscious of expressing, evoking, manipulating, the Eucharistic power on a plane other than the physical, so that the physical words and actions seemed to be but the echoes of the real sounds, and I performed the actual physical movements as in a dream.

At the words, "May the Lord purify me that I may worthily perform His Service," it was as if the purification took the form of a translation of myself elsewhere, into Nirvanic consciousness in fact, and at that level making a special channel for the Eucharistic Light to descend into the matter of the physical plane through every intermediate plane, so as to effect everywhere a special concentration of already existing Eucharistic activity. I noticed how every physical act from the beginning to the end helped in the preparation of the physical plane for the reception of the mighty forces stirring so gloriously elsewhere. I heard at one level the gradual weaving together of beautiful notes into a marvellous symphony of sound reaching a stupendous apotheosis at the act of transubstantiation of the Bread and Wine, an apotheosis reproduced in each one of us in the act of Communion and

equally beautifully but differently, in the two great Benedictions at the close.

At a higher level, the Nirvanic, there began an indescribable interplay of Light, with penetrating flashes of glorious radiance at each of the great stages. I do not know whether I was simultaneously conscious on several planes, or whether it was a case of rapid passing from one to another. Be this as it may, on the physical plane every word uttered, every act performed, every step taken, seemed alive with power, with great outflowing pulsations of forces surging in all directions.

As for myself, so far as regards the physical plane, I was in a dream, the centre of my waking consciousness having transferred itself elsewhere. But this dream-condition was by no means a state of diminished physical-plane effectiveness. On the contrary, I knew I was far more effective than normally by very reason of the dream-condition, which was a sign of the minimization of the static interference of the physical body due to the density of its composition. The physical body had been sublimated to its utmost measure in order the more easily to transmit the forces generated on higher planes, and the dream-condition was the result of a very conscious working from

within rather than from without. The physical body was but the river's mouth opening on the sea of outer life. Far away were those mighty mountain-torrents which made the river and sent it forth to the sea.

I wonder if I can at all make clear the effect of the retirement of the centre of consciousness from an outer to an inner plane. I presume that the effect of every Initiation is not merely an expansion of the circumference of consciousness, but also a very definite modification in the centre of consciousness, which appears to be in the nature of a retirement to an inner region, because, after each Step, one finds oneself from one point of view living in a new field of consciousness more than in the old. This new field is a subtler field, a more archetypal field, and the apparent withdrawal inwards of the centre of consciousness is due to the fact that the old world of consciousness has lost some of its supreme and exclusive significance. No longer is it able to exact the lion's share of attention. It must take its place among other worlds, a place suitable to its station in life. No longer is it able to occupy the whole of the foreground of the picture. Other worlds very properly claim their place, and the old world must make room for them.

The taking of the first of the Great Initiations synchronizes with the beginning of the retirement of the centre of consciousness to the Buddhic plane—the plane of Unity. This process becomes intensified in the course of the Second and Third Initiations, and it seems as if the centre of consciousness should be firmly established in Buddhi by the time the fruits of that stage are being gathered. Then, at the fourth of the Great Initiations, the centre of consciousness tends to move still further inwards, and begins to make a home on the Nirvanic plane, a process which should be complete at the threshold of the fifth of the Great Initiations.

In the light of my own experience, it is certainly accurate to speak of a withdrawal or retirement of the centre of consciousness, if we look at what has happened from one aspect only. I feel able to say quite definitely that Nirvana is now my true home, though I have only just taken possession of my new estate and have yet to explore it. But I am living in Nirvana, whatever excursions I may take into the regions without. I shall often be visiting my old homes, but I shall no longer be living in any of them except quite temporarily, and in any case even when I do live

in them I am living " from " this newer home. I may regularly visit the scenes of my " childhood," of my various " childhoods," but they will have ceased to be as " real " as once they were. Hence, occupying this new home, all outer worlds are, from one point of view, dreamlands. Still following this point of view, to return to the physical plane is to go through a series of fallings asleep. I fall asleep from the Nirvanic to the Buddhic plane. I fall asleep from the Buddhic to the mental plane, from the mental to the emotional, from the emotional to the physical plane. In one sense, therefore, I may be said to fall fast asleep on this outermost plane, however much in ordinary parlance I am supposed to wake up.

But this by itself would be a very inaccurate description of the facts. True, all outer worlds are worlds of shadows compared with the inner worlds. To me the Nirvanic world is the supremely real world, though to Those at higher levels even the Nirvanic splendours must be but as shadows of something still greater. This physical world is in many ways far more of a dreamland than ever it has been before. I have discovered a new contrast. I had already known the contrast between the Buddhic and the physical worlds.

Now I am beginning to know that between the Nirvanic and the physical world, and the greater brightness necessarily intensifies the shadows. Yet, in fact, even the outermost world is a world of reality. The densest matter is no less Divinity than the most refined, the distinction being but in degree of self-consciousness. The outer world may be a dreamland, a world of shadows, yet it is God's dream, God's shadow; and God's dreams come true. From this point of view, therefore, dreamland becomes a very real land, in which we must be happy to work, even though we *live* elsewhere, because we have the glorious task of making the dream-world come true. We look out from our Nirvanic window upon the world without. We see how infinitely less beautiful it all is than the home in which we live. But we see, too, how beautiful it might become. So we leave our Nirvanic home, taking its memories with us, and in the light of these memories we strive to fashion the Real out of that dream of the Real which, for convenience' sake, we call the unreal. When we say:

> From the unreal lead us to the Real,
> From darkness lead us to Light,
> From death lead us to Immortality,

we are in truth saying:

> From the unconscious lead us to the Self-Conscious,
> From the dream lead us to the True,
> From the beginning lead us to the End.

The unreal is the promise of the Real. Darkness is the shadow of Light. Death is the gateway to Immortality. In the unreal help me to find the Real. In the darkness help me to find the Light. In death enable me to perceive Immortality.

It is but natural, especially at the earlier stages of Nirvanic realization, that the outer worlds should be emphasized in their dream-aspect rather than in their real aspect. For the time being the dream-world may seem more of a dream-world than ever. And there may be some excuse for yearning for Nirvana as one moves about in the midst of the physical plane. A child may well be forgiven for being all eagerness about the wonderful new discovery he has made, and for a certain temporary listlessness with regard to more habitual surroundings. But we live under the great law of readjustment, and it should not take us long to come to the conclusion that in this very dream-world we have the joyous task of making it come *true*. We begin to

understand that our very realization of Nirvana depends upon our work in the dream-world.

I suppose it is possible to realize Nirvana without actually working on the physical plane, but it is not possible to realize it without working somewhere; and it does not matter where we work. Why not, then, help to pay the debt we owe to the physical plane and all there is in it? As I write these words, I am reminded of the fact that in the charming conception of Father Christmas bringing gifts to little children we have one of the most beautiful of truths. Every Saviour of the world is a Father Christmas, His hands laden with good things for His world. Every good man holds the same position to his world. Every one of us who has taken a step nearer to truth must become a benefactor laden with truth. More than ever must I, too, because of the new gifts bestowed upon me, become a more enthusiastic distributor of my world. The world is like the little child wondering what Christmas will bring, even hoping, perhaps, for this or that, dreaming of all the wonderful things which will be by its bedside when it wakes in the morning. Sometimes there may be disappointment. Sometimes what is good, rather than what is desired, may be brought.

Sometimes we receive what we desire in order that we may learn the lesson that what we wish is not always what is good. Sometimes we receive what is wanted because our wish is right. Let our wishes be always for the good and the true, that this dream-world of ours may come true, may reflect as perfectly as may be the higher worlds of which it is the physical body. We must live in dreams that thay may come true, for the dream is the seed of the Real, as the Real is the future of the seed in an Eternal Now.

CHAPTER X

LATER THOUGHTS

I look'd
And, in the likeness of a river, saw
Light flowing, from whose amber-seeming waves
Flash'd up effulgence, as they glided on
'Twixt banks, on either side, painted with spring,
Incredible how fair: and, from the tide,
There ever and anon, outstarting, flew
Sparkles instinct with life; and in the flowers
Did set them like to rubies chased in gold:
Then, as if drunk with odours, plunged again
Into the wondrous flood; from which, as one
Re-enter'd, still another rose. "The thirst
Of knowledge high, whereby thou art inflamed,
To search the meaning of what here thou seest,
The more it warms thee, pleases me the more.
But first behoves thee of this water drink,
Or e'er that longing be allay'd." So spake
The day-star of mine eyes: Then thus sub-joine'd:
"This stream; and these, forth issuing from its gulf,
And diving back, a living topaz each,
With all this laughter on its bloomy shores,
Are but a preface, shadowy of the truth

They emblem: not that, in themselves, the things
Are crude; but on thy part is the defect,
For that thy views not yet aspire so high."
Never did babe, that had outslept his wont,
Rush, with such eager straining to the milk,
As I toward the water; bending me,
To make the better mirrors of mine eyes
In the refining wave: and as the eaves
Of mine eye-lids did drink of it, forthwith
Seem'd it unto me turne'd from length to round.
Then as a troop of maskers, when they put
Their vizors off, look other than before;
The counterfeited semblance thrown aside:
So into greater jubilee were changed
Those flowers and sparkles; and distinct I saw,
Before me, either court of heaven display'd.
O prime enlightener! though who gavest me strength
On the high triumph of thy realm to gaze;
Grant virtue now to utter what I kenn'd.
There is in heaven a light, whose goodly shine
Makes the Creator visible to all
Created, that in seeing Him alone
Have peace; and in a circle spreads so far,
That the circumference were too loose a zone
To girdle in the sun. All is one beam,
Reflected from the summit of the first,
That moves, which being hence and vigour takes.
And as some cliff, that from the bottom eyes
His image mirror'd in the crystal flood
As if to admire his brave appareling
Of verdure and of flowers; so, round about,

Eyeing the light, on more than million thrones,
Stood, eminent, whatever from our earth
Has to the skies return'd. How wide the leaves,
Extended to their utmost, of this rose,
Whose lowest step embosoms such a space
Of ample radiance! Yet, nor amplitude
Nor height impeded, but my view with ease
Took in the full dimensions of that joy.
Near or remote, what there avails, where God
Immediate rules, and Nature, awed, suspends
Her sway? Into the yellow of the rose
Perennial, which, in bright expansiveness,
Lays forth its gradual blooming, redolent
Of praise to the never-wintering sun,
As one, who fain would speak yet holds his peace,
Beatrice led me; and, "Behold," she said,
"This fair assemblage; stoles of snowy white,
How numberless! The city, where we dwell,
Behold how vast; and these our seats so throng'd,
Few now are wanting here.

DANTE: *Paradise, Canto* XXX.

NATURALLY, I am continually brooding on, or may I say "in," Nirvana. My comparatively busy life leaves plenty of room for such brooding, since to live in Nirvana is less to add to one's occupations and more to follow the daily round from a new centre. I am learning to "Nirvanize" my life, which means that I am endeavouring to enter into the Nirvanic

spirit in everything, and so gradually to achieve a new mode of Being.

The dominant reflection inevitably centres round the Advent of the Lord. That He has come I know, not merely because I have been told but because the whole world is visibly and audibly changed. A new richness of colour has been infused into it, a new melody permeates it, because the Lord of Nirvana, the Lord of Bliss, meditates upon His world, is engaged in the wondrous Yoga of physical incarnation so that He lives among His younger brethren as He has not lived for more than 2,000 years.

Not a single living thing is without a newer, a truer value, whatever be the kingdom of nature, for the Lord of Happiness is awakening all life to happiness. And what is this happiness but the bright shadow and reflection of Nirvanic bliss? The Advent of the Lord is a descent, an awakening, of Nirvana—the Abode of Happiness. As I have already said, the world cannot yet know Nirvana, but it can draw near. It can join in the worship, and thus gain something of the glory, as the High Priest of Happiness celebrates the great Ritual of the Transubstantiation at the altars of men's hearts. The Lord Christ, the Jagat Guru, the Bodhisattwa, call Him by whatever

name you will, has come to the whole world, to all things that live in it, has become a Priest in the innumerable tabernacles in which life dwells in this world of forms, as the Lord Sri Krishna multiplied Himself in gracious recognition of the selfless devotion of His Gopis. He is embodied Nirvana in us all. Nirvana has come to us. Can you not feel and understand all that I have written, I hope far more than I have written, because His Light shines as rarely it has shone before throughout the world? Remember that though the nucleus, so far as regards this outer world, may be the body He has chosen for certain aspects of His ministry, yet in very truth He is omnipresent. Have you, my reader, yet welcomed the Guest Who is knocking at your door? Has He come to you, for you have welcomed Him?

I could write at length upon the inner universal transubstantiation effected by the Lord's closer presence, how a new Light radiates upon all things and therefore from all things. But I should like my readers to be able to sense this for themselves, themselves to meet the Lord face to face in a shrine of their being. They will then know, in the flash of recognition and of adoration, more of Nirvana

than any pen could depict, than any brush could paint, than any outer music could voice.

To turn to a lesser theme, may I in all humility set forth my growing conviction that gravitation should less be considered as a specific and specialized attribute of, say, the Sun or of a planet than as an inherent property of all matter everywhere? It is, I believe, said nowadays that the Sun does not exercise Gravitation upon a planet, and I believe the statement to be profoundly true, except for the fact that the finer the body the greater the power of spiritual gravitation, and the larger the mass the greater the quality of physical gravitation, so that the gravitational co-efficient of the Sun as a body is greater than that of any other body in this universe. The Law of gravitation is a law of all planes and of all modes of consciousness, for it is the Law of Brotherhood, the Law of Essential Identity. As I have already said, the Sun is everywhere and is essentially all things, so that the Law of Gravitation is in fact nothing more, though nothing less, than an expression of a quality of Light. In the light of Nirvana I perceive a transcendent gravitation which I have expressed in the word "Being". In that word is

disclosed an apotheosis of gravitation. "Being" holds universes together, as does gravitation. I must not speculate further, but it will be seen that along this pathway is a fascinating avenue of study.

To change the subject, and to follow another line of meditation, I find that while reasoning is doubtless a useful process of growth, in the para-rational regions of Buddhi and Nirvana there are other measurement-standards. Reasoning is a good servant, but a bad master. Reasoning helps us a little on our way, but only as far as the frontiers of the lower mind. Once beyond these, reasoning can do nothing for us. What then are the new measurement-standards ? I can only describe these in a phrase—a sense of inherent essential values. It is as if we now weighed things not in terms of logic but in terms of unity or of being. More unity, greater value. More being, greater value. Less unity, less being, less value. And, what is more important, the greater the unity, the being, the more truly logical so far as regards the lower worlds, whatever our so-called logic may say. Logically we come to such and such a conclusion. If the logic be accurate we must come to the same conclusion when we apply the measurement of unity-value and of

being-value. How infinitely more careful those of us need to be, who have some acquaintance with these finer instruments of precision, that we make no hasty judgments, that we do not blindly accept outer world valuations, that we test even vaunted logic in the keener and more penetrating light of unity and being-measures. Things as they appear to be so often disclose little of themselves as they are. As we develop the Buddhic and Nirvanic measurement-standards we re-measure our worlds, and often reach startling results, one of these being that not infrequently those who are first in the world's estimation are the real laggards, while those who come last in the world's estimation are nearest to the Kingdom of Righteousness, as Great Teachers have pointed out. Here we have another line for valuable meditation, and I might add that, though it may appear that these more ultimate measurement-standards might hardly seem to apply to processes entirely within the realm of a resoning and argument, as a matter of fact it is in this very realm that they apply with great effectiveness. The logical process is a step by step process, is a process of deduction from premisses to conclusion, or is a process of inferring from individualities to generalizations. On the

other hand, the unity and being-measurement-standards have nothing to do with stages, or with deduction or induction. They examine qualitatively. They determine direction. They listen to *motifs* and compare them with the Divine *motif*. They explore colour schemes and compare them with the Divine Colour Scheme. They stop short at the very premisses themselves. The conclusion will take care of itself. It is the child of the premisses. So it is the premisses that matter. Let them ring true to these inner measurement-standards and all must inevitably be well with the conclusion. Similarly with arguments and reasonings. Their validity and worth depend upon the extent to which they lead in the direction of Unity and of Being. Once Buddhi and Nirvana have been contacted there can no longer be satisfaction with written word, with Scripture, with dogma or doctrine, conventional or otherwise. To agree that such and such a theory is generally accepted, or that the Scriptures say so and so and that therefore so and so is so, ceases to be enough for those who, entering these inner regions, are beginning to learn that they can and must know for themselves. They have ceased to be cripples walking with the aid of external sanctions.

They have ceased to be orthodox or, for the matter of that, heterodox. They are learning to be true.

To record yet another reflection, I find myself increasingly impressed by the way in which the Nirvanic consciousness lifts one out of the domination of space and time and gives free access to past, present and future. Einstein has already been freeing us from slavery to time and to space. We are learning to evlove a space-time, which itself is relative, out of the two, and we emphasize our freedom from the thraldom of space and time by talking of conditions which are space-like or time-like. Even at the Buddhic level we begin the conscious transcendence of space and time, while at the Nirvanic level they almost cease to have meaning for us. Space and time were merely "invented" to show that there is something beyond them both. The value of limitation is not the life within it but rather the effort to get beyond it, and Buddhi and Nirvana are a beyond to which, as science is now dimly beginning to perceive, they point. At the Nirvanic level of consciousness one can be, or at least begin to be, simultaneously everywhere—"everywhere" still a limited area, but a transcendence of time and space as we

conceive these " down here ". The value of time and space are in connection with objectivity. Tables and chairs owe that mode of being, which we designate as table and chair, to considerations of time-space. We need time-space to give us tables and chairs, for we need objects down here and time-space gives them to us. Objects, as we are told, are events in time-space. A table is an event. But we are not concerned with objects in Nirvanic consciousness. We are concerned with that subjectivity of which they are the expression in the lower worlds. Hence the limitations of time and space, appropriate and necessary to objective existence in the lower worlds, cease to exist when we deal with their subjective realities, and it is even possible, after practice, to a certain extent—I do not know how far —to hold this subjectivity in relation to the very objects themselves so as to perceive them in some measure without their time-space qualifications, thus uniting subject and object, or should I say thus merging object in subject and yet retaining a shadow of objectivity. I am afraid I am expressing myself somewhat confusedly, but I can only hope my readers follow to a certain extent what I am driving at. I see what I mean ; but this is

hardly encouraging to those who have yet to know that there is a meaning to see. Perhaps I can make myself clearer if I suggest to you to try the experiment of universalizing a chair or a table, subjectivizing it, while at the same time, as long as you can, holding to the objectivity. I do not advise you to try very hard. Try lazily and comfortably. You may then begin to see what I mean (about as much as I see what I mean), which, believe me, scoff as some may, is by no means not all.

But we can not only de-time-space the ordinary objects of the outer world. We can de-time-space faiths and nationalities, races and peoples. From the Nirvanic standpoint the essence of life is Universal Being, which is the same thing as Universal Truth or as Universal Law. There is no Christianity, or Hinduism, or Buddhism, or Islam, or Zoroastrianism in Nirvana. These terms are time-space terms, highly vital up to a certain point, but beyond this point perceived to be no more than a number of objects depending upon a universal subject. The subject passes through the spectrum and objects are reflected. The vision of most people does not include perception of the spectrum, so they see but one object as true. They are not aware that it is one among many

reflections. But Buddhic consciousness discloses the existence of the spectrum, enabling us to infer the subject behind; and Nirvanic consciousness takes us into the realm of the subject itself, though it is quite clear that the time will some day come when the Nirvanic "subject" will be perceived to be but a mode of a still more essential unity. How much happier the world would be if we could at least realize the subjectivity common to all faiths, however much we might in our lower bodies prefer a special reflection, a special objectivity. It is the same as regards nations and peoples and classes. There is a subjectivity embracing them all. I would, however, recommend students to guard against the very real danger of ignoring the objects as they gain vision of the subject. To put the matter in comprehensible terms, a spirit of internationalism is a most valuable quality, but we must never be international at the expense of national duty. Patriotism is not in the least degree irreconcilable with the spirit of universal brotherhood. On the contrary, the virtue of universal brotherhood can only truly be practised as we fulfil the smaller duties of national citizenship. We do not discard Buddhi as we assume Nirvana. We fulfil Buddhi in Nirvana. We

do not discard Christianity or any other faith as we assume Theosophy. We fufil our faith, we fulfil our nationality, as we become Theosophists. We become wiser, not less ardent.

Let me now show how entry into the Nirvanic consciousness enables us to transcend time in a very special way. I can do this no better than by means of the following quotation from Camille Flammarion's *Popular Astronomy*:

> A man, a spirit, leaving the earth, either by death or otherwise, this year, and transported in some hours or days to a great distance, would see the earth of former times, and would see himself again as a child, for this aspect of the earth would not arrive where he was till after a long delay.

Now Flammarion here postulates a particular place so determined as to effect a synchronization between the individual as now and himself as then, the present meeting the past. But from the Nirvanic standpoint there is no need for transportation or place. All times and places are modes of being. It is therefore but a matter of ringing the changes upon a Mode Universal. Light travels, no doubt, or at least we say it does, though I have my doubts, but it never travels so far away that it can be

lost. The Light which made that mode of time-space which I call my childhood is not, from the Nirvanic standpoint, in the past. It has not travelled away to a distance. It is immanent. All is immanent in Nirvana, and had Flammarion experienced Nirvanic consciousness it would not have been necessary for him to go to the trouble of removing the man or spirit. He would have made him change his mode of consciousness. And as for the Past, so for the Future. That, too, is immanent, as now and then I have had occasion to experience. It is extremely difficult to suggest how the future is as immanent as past or present, but it might be useful to advance the postulate that God began with the Future and organized His unfoldment so as inevitably to lead to it. Thus everything has its Futurity as it were stamped upon it. All things are cast in the mould of the Future, however long they may take to fill the mould and to become its perfect replica. And Nirvana is a department of God's Laboratory in which certain of His Plans are stored, and in which are models —nay, more than models—of the relative perfections now being carved in the lower worlds out of the great Rough Ashlars of Life. Is there not a complete Light-History of the

world, written in the language of the Eternal Now? What is the Akashic Record but such a history? Even we ordinary creatures can make Light-History in the form of films. We can do this for past and present. Is it difficult to conceive that Superior Intelligence can do for the future, which is only future objectively considered, that which ordinary people can do for other modes of time-space?

Once again, inevitably, I am fascinated by my contemplation of our Lord the Sun. To read about Him in an astronomical treatise is, perhaps, to me the most enjoyable of all forms of reading. At every point I stop both to marvel and to relate the description, whatever it may be, to its Nirvanic counterparts. For example, I read somewhere recently the following passage:

> What comes from the Sun and from all sources of Light and Heat is not then, to speak accurately, either light or heat (for these are merely impressions) but motion—motion extremely rapid. It is not heat which is scattered through space, for the temperature of space is, and remains everywhere, glacial. It is not light, for space has constantly the darkness seen at midnight. It is motion, a rapid vibration of the ether which is transmitted to infinity, and does not produce a perceptible effect until it meets with an obstacle which transforms it.

Without being able to follow the author in his observations regarding space, the most significant fact remains that while, Nirvanically speaking, Light may be regarded as the archetypal *substans* of the lower worlds, yet Light itself has its own archetype for which we use the word " motion ". Light may be our supreme archetypal percept of the Divine Motion of things, yet the Divine Motion itself, which down here we may call Light or Sound, is other than these expressions of itself, as we begin to realize when we contemplate that wonderful shadow of Reality which in Hinduism is depicted as the Dance of the Lord Shiva. Even motion leaves me dissatisfied. I know that this word limits, and that our idea of motion, however exalted, is but a caricature of the Divine Motion. But it is something to imagine, however feebly, a transcendence beyond Light, beyond the Lightning-standing-still. I am interested in the last portion of the concluding sentence—no " perceptible effect until it meets with an obstacle which transforms it ". This is an admirable statement of the continual transubstantiation taking place between higher and lower, between inner and outer. The Divine " Friction " between subjectivity and objectivity is the whole of evolution. But

in truth, of course, obstacles are non-existent. The vibrations of Divinity do not meet obstacles. They readjust as between their respective particles. It is readjustment that is continually taking place, and readjustment only.

Then there is another passage which I would venture to quote here:

> The Sun comes to us in the form of heat, He leaves us in the form of heat, but between His arrival and His departure He has given birth to the varied powers of our globe . . . (yet) the earth only stops in its passage the two thousand millionth part of the total radiation . . . all the planets of the system intercept but the 227 millionth part of the radiation emitted by the Central Star. The rest passes by the worlds and *appears* to be lost . . .

but is, on the contrary, utilized to purposes of which we can have no conception.

At this point I contact once again a Universality beyond the limits of any one individual system. I know that α Centauri and 61 Cygni, the Suns nearest to us, even though 25 and 43 millions of miles distant from us, or 4·35 and 7·2 light-years respectively away, exercise potent influences upon us in the marvellous scheme of interpenetration and cosmic adjustment with which

some of the Greater Elders of our world are concerned. They reach us, affect us, modify us, through the universal Light in which the whole Cosmos shares. Indeed, though sound would take us more than three million years to reach us from α Centauri, still the sound does reach us and can be heard by Those Who have the ears to hear. As has been truly said, "Light transports us into the infinite life. It also transports us into the eternal life."

Let me add the following beautiful passage from Flammarion:

> (It is the heat of the Sun) which maintains the three states of bodies—solid, liquid, gaseous . . . It is the Sun which blows in the air, which flows in the water, which moans in the tempest, which sings in the unwearied throat of the nightingale. It attaches to the sides of the mountains, the cataracts, and the avalanches are precipitated with an energy they draw from Him. Thunder and lightning are in their turn a manifestation of His Power. Every fire which burns, and every flame which shines, has received its life from the Sun . . . and still all this is nothing, or almost nothing, compared with the real Power of Sun!

A fine description of Immanence, yet telling only a tithe of the truth, for the Sun *is* all things everywhere.

CHAPTER XI

MOTHER-LIGHT

NO more glorious vision has Nirvana given me than that of the apotheosis—or must I say again, an apotheosis—of womanhood. We are familiar with the conception of God the Father, but little information is there regarding God the Mother. Yet we come nearer an ultimate Reality when we begin to be able to sense the Mother-Principle as co-eternal with the Father-Principle, co-existent with it, both emerging from one ineffable source. So far as I am aware, in every great Faith the Mother-Principle finds noble and wonderful expression, perhaps as Power-Sacrifice, impersonal, "awful" in the true sense of the word, or perhaps as Purity-Sacrifice, an ideal woman, such, for example, as we have in Christianity in Our Lady.

In terms of Nirvana I seem to perceive a Mother-Light and a Father-Light, each a component part of the Lightning-standing-still. I wonder whether I can differentiate

between the two. The Mother-Light impresses me first of all with a sense of Simple, Majestic Dignity, the Dignity of the Unveiled Real, the Dignity of Holiness, in which are beautifully blended Restraint, reserved Power, Refuge, Protection. I seem to see within the glorious embodiments in the outer world of this great Mother-Light a radiant sea of Light, and the image comes to me of a vast expanse of still and silent ocean with a mother-of-pearl glittering in the soft light of the full moon, the slight ripples causing a ceaseless shimmering. Think what the ocean is. Remember its tremendous, irresistible power. But this ocean of the Mother-Light is never lashed into storm—it remains ever peaceful, ever calm, inscrutable, deep beyond the power of words to express, yet shimmering, scintillating, with that Love-Light which is a mighty mountain peak of Wisdom-Compassion.

In this great sea of Mother-Light lives every woman in the world, in all worlds. Its Light permeates her and its sea upholds her, so that she rests upon it, is enfolded in it. How calm is this sea of Light, how utterly safe, how wondrously about every woman in all worlds! Every woman is one with this mighty sea, is indeed a holy and consecrated

channel through which it flows outwards to generate and to fructify all life: *Mater Generatrix*. As broods the Mother-Light over every act of renewal in every kingdom of Nature, so should every woman know herself to be the priestess of this Light Divine to every kingdom of Nature. What a mission! How splendid an office! Woman the Fire of Creation.

At this point let me for a moment place in juxtaposition the Father-Light. What do I perceive in differentiation? Action, a Flashing Forth, may I say a storm-ridden sea, pulsating with mighty outpourings? The Positive complementary to the Negative; the two mighty Poles of manifested Being. Entering the essence of these two great Lights I see the One. And almost I begin to understand the One, because as I watch (or is it as I change?) I perceive the Light-quality dissolve into apparent nothingness—it is not really nothingness—and there remains a More-than-Light, that to which even Light owes its being. I can say no more. But I realize how both Father-Light and Mother-Light must together express this More-than-Light as it assumes the shadow of manifestation.

I return to the contemplation of the Mother-Light. Instantly the image of mighty Pallas

Athene comes before my inner sight. In some wonderful way She seems a most perfect form of Mother-Light, infinitely majestic, awe-inspiring, a Sanctuary in which the afflicted take refuge and issue forth strong and unafraid, a great Heartener, Queen of Heaven's Ministering Powers. The ancient statues of Her convey something of Her Glory. As I gaze upon her, a miracle happens. I see myriads of Her. For a moment I wonder what has happened, but almost immediately I perceive that I see her reflected in all womanhood in all kingdoms of Nature. Every woman a sparkling jewel of the Mother-Light, imprisoning its glories to release and speed them on their way. The whole world should sparkle with these jewels, yet many are dull, lifeless, dimmed by desecration.

Where are the women to restore to womanhood its splendid lustre? Where are the women to lead the women of every Nation on a great crusade to recover and fulfil their heritage? How long shall it be ere women remember that their bodies are shrines of the Mother-Light at which they may worship with mighty Sacraments, among them those of Marriage and Motherhood? How long shall it be ere children are born in holy Temples rather than

in hovels of lust? How long shall it be before the body of the little child is in very truth the sacred consummation of blended Mother-Light and Father-Light, dedicated to noble purposes because conceived in holy aspiration?

I suppose this sounds utterly alien from modern ideas of motherhood, womanhood, childhood. But I have been abiding awhile in the Real, and I have been living in the intense yearning of the World-Mother that Her children may draw nearer to Her, that She may press them to Her Heart. Where there is sorrow, grief, despair, agony, there is the World-Mother, tending, cherishing, comforting, as many a pain-stricken mother knows, as many a lonely child knows too. Yet She could do so much more, would womanhood but turn to Her. The Christ has returned to His world; many of us know this, and are preparing a welcome for our Guest and Father. But do we know, too, that with Him comes the World-Mother? Not, perhaps, in Her own most glorious Form, though possibly in bodies consecrated specifically to Her use; nevertheless She comes, and Her mission is to the women of the world, to remind them of the glory of womanhood, to summon them to lead the world and to give to the world great men

and women, and to exhort them to make womanhood worthy of reverence as She will exhort men to reverence womanhood. We ask the world to welcome its Christ. We ask the world to welcome its Mother as She returns with Her Son Who is Her King.

How clearly I perceive the Nirvanic Glory of womanhood, so distorted and misshapen down here. Womanhood *in excelsis!* And I see, in this return of the Christ, Heaven that is Nirvana kissing earth and endowing earth once more with its glories, and none greater than the Mother-Light. Downward shines the Mother-Light through every World-Mother this earth has ever known. Once again do They come near to the world which aforetime They have mothered. Once more They stir in the heart of every woman, summoning her to light again the sacrificial Fire in the temple of her being. Many They call to the sacraments of Marriage and individual Motherhood. But They call all to that wider Motherhood of which the world is being so disastrously deprived in these modern days when men and women alike have forgotten woman's true place in life.

In an article appearing in the August issue (1926) of *The Liberal Catholic* of Sydney,

Australia, I ventured to describe a little glimpse of Our Lady which I had in the light of Nirvana. I reproduce it here as the externalization of the flash in which I first began to know Her as far as I am capable of understanding Her. I saw a Light. I have put that Light into feeble words:

"There is no more beautiful or mysterious truth in the world than the truth conveyed in those infinitely touching words—'Our Lady.' In every Faith we find this truth. It is almost the heart of every Faith. Each Faith has its Power, its Wisdom and its Love. Within all three lies enshrined Motherhood—directing the Power, enlightening the Wisdom, beautifying the Love. Our Lady, chatelaine of the castle of the world, is wonderful as the Mother of Jesus, infinitely appealing to all that is noblest in us. Jesus, the Vehicle of our Lord the Christ. Our Lady, the Way of the Christ to His World. In Her Holiness She is far, far away from us. In Her Motherhood She is 'nearer than hands and feet.'

"But she is more even than the Mother of Jesus, more than the Symbol of Her in any Faith, for we find Her on every plane of nature, in every kingdom of nature. I ascend the loftiest regions I am capable of reaching,

and there I find Her—Light Radiant, a Light exquisitely distinguishable from all other Light. In that Light glows the Mother-Principle of Light and Life and Glory. I am face to face with the shadow of the Motherhood of God. I see her as the supreme embodiment of Motherhood everywhere, in all kingdoms, on all planes. She is the Universal Mother—the apotheosis of all that makes motherhood the purest reflection of the Nature of God. In every act of motherhood is marvellously reflected and ever renewed the supreme wonder of the Sacrifice of God, so that motherhood becomes the most sacred thing in the world.

" Wherever there is motherhood there is Our Lady, and as I write these words there comes before me the picture of 'The Lady of the Lamp'—Florence Nightingale, as she passes from bedside to bedside among the wounded in her hospital at Scutari, carrying comfort and courage to every sufferer. I see this picture as a faint image of the Compassion of Our Lady, as She moves from bedside to bedside among the women-expectant of the world. The whole world is Her hospice, and myriad-formed She broods with infinite tenderness over every mother-to-be as she consummates her divine Act of Remembrance of the Sacrifice of God.

"I am told, too, the story of the poor Hindu girl in an Indian village, who, about to become a mother, was anxiously expecting her own mother to 'mother' her in her time of exquisite trial, through a crucifixion into a resurrection. Her mother lived far away, but was hastening to her daughter's side. She had not arrived when the agonies of birth began, but Another Mother was there in her form, so that the girl rejoiced that her mother had come in time. Tenderly Parvati—Our Lady of the Hindus, the Mother-Principle—guided Her child through the sacrament of Motherhood, enfolding her in joy and peace. At last the mother herself came, and Our Lady vanished. But the young mother knew not what had happened, and one day thanked her mother for her marvellous tenderness and care. Astonished, the older woman answered that to her great grief and anxiety she had not been able to arrive in time, but was so happy to see that someone else had bestowed upon her child a mother's care. 'But . . .' said the daughter, and then upon them smiled Parvati, and they understood and rejoiced in deepest reverence and gratitude.

"At every Sacrament of Motherhood Our Lady ministers, and many women there be

who see Her, while all who are conscious of the Sacrament know in full measure that Peace which is Her Presence. To all She comes, taking for each the form she loves and worships. How wonderful is the Motherhood of God, the Mother-Principle of life . . . a glowing Glory, a glowing Triumph, a glowing Tenderness, a glowing Sacrifice, a glowing Understanding, a glowing Power to guard and cherish. The Light which is this Mother-Principle flashes forth many-hued, encircling the world, radiating upon all things. In every kingdom of Nature shines this perfect Light. Upon every act of creation it rests in priceless benediction. Of this Light Our Lady, this Universal Mother of us all, is the Epiphany, the embodied Form. She is a Being, a Person, Who has trodden this glorious road to Divinity, and has reached at-one-ment in Motherhood. No picture, no words, can describe Her, yet She is no abstraction, no pure Principle, but Mother-Light in glorious Form. By the side of every mother does She stand as the mother bears splendid witness in her own physical body that she is a Temple of the Living God, and that in her this Sacrifice is mirrored anew for the wonder of this world. It is Our Lady Who is the High Priestess in this holy sacrifice. It is Our Lady Who touches

the agony and makes it joy, Who offers the sacrifice and makes it bliss.

" Each mother-to-be is a Temple made ready for Our Lady. Never does She fail to come when the offering is upon the altar, an image of God to be sent forth into the world on a further journey in the Great Quest. And even beforehand come Angels of Her Presence, ministering, comforting, encouraging, glorifying. Can you perceive from this great sacrament of birth, how great indeed, how solemn, is the sacrament that precedes it—the sacrament of marriage? Over every marriage, truly, broods Our Lady's Blessing. The married couple become Her children, united for that beautiful sacrifice of birth-giving which they prepare in shining love for offering by Our Lady. As in the Bread and Wine of the Eucharistic Service is the Real Presence of our Lord, so in every child-birth is the Real Presence of our Lady. How glorious the role of woman—temple, priestess, altar, chalice, in one! Is not every child-birth a marvellous Eucharistic Service—sacred and joyous beyond the power of words to paint?

" Would that the old-time reverence for women returned! Would that women the world over entered into their heritage of priesthood!

All women may not be able to marry. Marriage may not be the vocation for every woman. Yet the priesthood remains. Is there not the service of the Benediction of the Most Holy Sacrament as well as the Eucharistic Service itself? Is there not so much in the world that woman alone can do, even though she be not called to be the priestess-mother? In these days when women have to earn their living—in many ways one cannot but regret the necessity, it savours of the world's want of reverence for womanhood—when women have to enter into so many of the sordid things of life, still may they remember the priesthood of their sex, that wherever they are and whatever they may be doing they remain the chosen priestesses and ministrants of Our Lady, to defend Motherhood against all degradation, to stand for the sacred rights of mother and of child, to represent the Mother-Principle in Life.

"Is not every child a child of Our Lady, the Universal Mother, and sacred for that if for no other reason? Is not every woman, because of this, a mother to all children, only less near than the physical mother, ready to replace her should need arise? The world needs more motherhood. Has not Our Lady been too little remembered, though She has ever remembered?

Motherhood begins before birth, and nowhere can we see its ending. Through life, through death, we need the mother. No more cherished word than ' mother '.

"No word so fraught with tenderest memories. No word more potent to arouse the heart's most poignant yearnings. Let there be honour to Motherhood from women and men alike. Dishonour is there to the Christ where there is dishonour to Our Lady. Dishonour is there to the Christ where there is dishonour to woman or to mother, for every woman is a Temple of Our Lady, whatever be the sacrifice destined to its altar.

" May every man bow in reverence before Her temples, may every woman cause Her light to shine upon the world. So shall the Mother-Light heal the wounds of the world, and make it new."

CHAPTER XII

THE DANGERS OF NIRVANA

I have gone the whole round of Creation: I saw and I spoke!
I, a work of God's hand for that purpose, received in my brain
And pronounced on the rest of His Handwork—returned Him again
His creation's approval or censure; I spoke as I saw.
I report, as a man may of God's work—all's love, yet all's law.
Now I lay down the judgment He lent me. Each faculty tasked
To perceive Him, has gained an abyss, where a dewdrop was asked.
Have I knowledge? Confounded it shrivels at Wisdom laid bare.
Have I forethought? How purblind, how blank, to the Infinite Care!
Do I task any faculty highest, to image success?
I but open my eyes, and perfection, no more and no less,
In the kind I imagine, full-fronts me, and God is seen God
In the star, in the stone, in the flesh, in the soul and the clod.

And thus looking within and around me, I ever renew
(With that stoop of the soul which in bending upraises it too)
The submission of Man's nothing-perfect to God's All-Complete,
As by each new obeisance in spirit, I climb to His feet!

ROBERT BROWNING (*Saul*).

THERE is, however, another side to all this. If this consciousness brings with it such wonderfully increased power, such certainty of immortality in bliss, it brings also greatly increased responsibility. It gives me a new and higher life, but I must live up to that life; to fall from that level, however slightly, is a very serious matter. For example, I have had an experience which I think is worthy of record in this book. The other day, when things were for the moment going somewhat awry, or perhaps I myself was a little off my guard, I felt—I am ashamed to say—somewhat irritable, and I am afraid I expressed myself irritably to one or two of my colleagues. The feeling was slight, and passed almost immediately; but its effect was really quite extraordinary. To all intents and purposes, effective work became impossible for the rest of the day. I worked; I went through routine

duties; but the *elan vital* was absent. The very moment I weakly allowed irritability to enter, peace departed, and I knew at once I had made a serious mistake. The irritability was only superficial; it was certainly not deep down; yet the disturbance even of the surface sent a shock through the whole system, and excluded me for the time being from the new kingdom I had hitherto been successfully inhabiting. Everyone of my bodies, from the physical upwards or inwards, became disturbed, and I passed a very unpleasant time.

In the course of a recent address, Signor Mussolini advised his audience to live dangerously. I have been thinking that to come into touch with Nirvanic consciousness is distinctly dangerous living, and this little episode of irritability has more than confirmed me in my opinion. In any case, to hold even a reflection of Nirvanic consciousness on the physical plane is no slight strain, for it means that every impact, whether from without or from within, is immeasurably intensified. That which to many might be but a ripple, to me is now a storm. The various bodies are infinitely more sensitive to external vibrations, while every word, feeling, thought, action, is charged with far greater power. The result is a much more

intense living. Every minute is more fully crammed than ever before " with sixty seconds' worth of distance run ".

To control Nirvanic consciousness involves a stupendous increase of power—power which may be used for good or for evil. I presume that were it consistently used for evil it would have to be shut off. It would be too dangerous to allow Nirvanic power to flow in wrong directions. But, short of this, I have come to the conclusion that it is a dangerous experiment to entrust an individual with this power, as I have reason to know in connection with my moment of irritability. I had no idea the effect of a comparatively little outburst could last so long. As I write these words, on the afternoon of the following day, I am still suffering from the after effects.

I clearly perceive how dangerous it is to have weaknesses. I really do not know what I should do if I became unable to control myself most rigidly, so that the more harmful weaknesses simply cease to exist. They must go if I am to travel with reasonable speed through the various sub-planes of Nirvana, or I might meet with a terrible catastrophe. Certain weaknesses are probably more dangerous than others. It is very dangerous to be proud ; to

be angry and irritable; to exaggerate, still more to lie; to misunderstand, to wrong another, to be uncharitable, or destructively critical; to have the lower prejudices and superstitions; as, for example, that God is terrible, avenges, is to be feared, condemns to everlasting punishment, can only be reached through a certain specific channel or through belief in certain specific dogmas or doctrines.

For at least a couple of days life has been very much more difficult because of that moment of irritability. I hope my friends have not noticed anything, because this would only make matters worse. In any case, the difficulty has not been to be overtly harmonious with the outer world, but to be truly harmonious and to maintain receptivity to the inner world. I have felt like some one who has, by his own act, been expelled from home, and is waiting in the outer cold until he can recover his equilibrium.

Every intensification of consciousness increases the delicacy of poise and balance of the human machine, so that, as time passes, smaller and smaller disturbances produce greater and greater effect. A little push gives a great swing—a dangerous swing, if the push be in the wrong direction. At the Nirvanic level

ordinary human weaknesses have to become impossible. Their retention would simply mean disruption, disintegration. It is very dangerous to live in Nirvana and to maintain, perhaps even to increase, the contacts with the outer world. In many ways it would be much easier to retire to lonely places, to the forest, so that many external circumstances, which tend to promote internal disturbances, might cease to be operative. On the other hand, for some of us, such retirement is not in the order of things, and we must bravely face the dangerous situation of immersion in the storms and stresses of the lower worlds. More and more must we abide in the Light we know, living ever at the centre and from the centre to the circumference, never away from the centre so that we lose our connection with it.

For a moment, during the period of irritability, I was away from my centre, and the result was—well, not disastrous, but at least highly disturbing. It is by no means easy to get back to the centre when one has broken away from it. I am getting back to the Light, but I have had a stern lesson, one which I hope I shall never forget; and I shudder to think what would happen if at any time I became really angry or indulged in one or other of those

weaknesses which are intolerable to Nirvanic life. I should expect at the least an illness of the physical body as the reflection of illness elsewhere. I notice particularly how appalling are the effects of depression, unhappiness, cruelty, falsehood. These are the negation of the Light, and a clash between the positive and negative is productive of the most serious consequences. On the whole, I hope, I am gaining steadiness, and my one saving grace is, perhaps, absorption in the Masters' work, an absorption which makes me either forget, or not care, to do the things I might otherwise do to my own detriment and to that of my surroundings. But I perceive very clearly the vital need for incessant watchfulness and self-control, and I venture to say to those who long for the glories I have endeavoured to describe: Remember the danger of holding Lightning while there is still the grosser dross to burn away. Remember the danger of recoil of power upon yourself when it meets weaknesses which have no business to thwart it as it should pass through you on its mission to the worlds without.

Nirvana is Power. As we are, so shall we use it; but woe to us if we use it unwisely, ignorantly, selfishly! Lightning illumines,

energizes; but it also destroys and consumes. Are we certain of our strength and self-control to use it to illumine and to energize? Let us look at our thoughts, our feelings, our actions, our speech. Let us take them as they are. Are they sometimes selfish, narrow, unkind? Now let us imagine Nirvana-Force vibrating with all its marvellous power in every thought, feeling, action, word. The good in us will, of course, be magnified; but so will the weakness. More power in everything we think, feel, do or say. Looking at ourselves without prejudice, how often would Nirvanic force be flowing in undesirable channels? Take this experience of mine which I have just described. See the far-reaching results of just a touch, not of anger, but of irritability. Realize that in the midst of these results one must take greatest care not to make matters still worse by being depressed or worried. On the contrary, one has to try to make up for one's foolishness at the very time when it is most difficult to do so. It is hard work indeed for a novice like myself, and frankly I do not recommend the experiment except under very adequate safeguards. I find life infinitely more wonderful and purposeful, but not for an instant must there

be the slightest cessation of watchfulness over oneself.

I might add, perhaps, that the observable effects of the introduction of this momentary irritability were dullness, distinct diminution of keenness of perception, loss of the sense of ineffable peace, a sense of drooping power, of power frittered away instead of being straight, direct and piercing. The scintillations of Light I have already described dulled down; I seemed to have contracted. I do not want the experience again, and I shall try to avoid it.

CHAPTER XIII

THE GLORIOUS TASK

From depth to height, from height to loftier height
The climber sets his foot and sets his face;
Tracks lingering sunbeams to their resting-place,
And counts the last pulsations of the light.
Strenuous by day and unsurprised by night,
He runs a race with time, and wins the race;
Emptied and stripped of all save only Peace,
Will, Love, a threefold panoply of might.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

THERE seem to be two aspects of Nirvana—the potential and the self-conscious—with gradations of unfoldment between. Potential Nirvana is Nirvana asleep, or at the most stirring in its sleep, perchance half-dreaming; but only asleep, for there is no death. The lower planes, especially the physical, are dreamlands—Nirvana in potentiality surely, for nowhere is it non-existent. Self-conscious Nirvana is awake, alive, beginning to use its

faculties. When fully self-conscious it is completely realized on all its planes, and perhaps on all lower planes, too, in a way which I am not yet able to understand. In one sense, all is Nirvana. In one sense, there is no unreal. In one sense, all is awake and alive; there is no dreaming. All is living, stirring, striving. In all things is Nirvana unfolding. In the seed lies concealed the flower, in the acorn the oak. Yet in terms of time, breaking the Eternal Now into its constituent Past, Present and Future, there is a process of unfoldment, and we must dream our picture before we can immortalize it on the canvas of the Eternal.

I should like to add that as I look back upon the threshold of Nirvana, before actual entry or unfoldment, I remember a specific preliminary testing—though at the time I did not at all realize it to be such—to ensure that the release from their imprisonment of the wider powers shall as far as possible be attended by no danger either to the individual or to the outer worlds. Such testing seems to be the law of all spiritual transitions; and a successful outcome confers, as it were, the password whereby admission is gained into an inner court of the Temple of Life. My Masonic brethren will recognize the truth of this in

reference to Masonry, and many of my readers will be familiar with the qualifications for Discipleship and the fetters associated with the Path of Holiness, the Way of Initiation. Spiritual powers can come only to those who are comparatively certain to use them in the service of the worlds.

It is true that even after their conferment provision is made against a possible misuse, such provision existing, so far as I am aware, even at exalted levels—where it is not, I take it, a question of misuse, but of certain interferences needing the introduction of unusual force. But the wider powers would not be conferred at all without some definite assurance —tempered, of course, by considerations of human frailty. Fortunately for human frailty the opening of the new powers is very gradual; only the lowest sub-plane coming within range, probably for some considerable time, and even then only by degrees. In the beginning the pressure is of the gentlest, but even the gentlest pressure of Nirvanic consciousness has a tremendous reaction upon all lower bodies, and quite transforms the physical, at all events from the standpoint of the waking consciousness and of the physical relation between the individual and his surroundings. The magic

wand of Nirvanic consciousness touches all things and makes them new.

As I have already said, there is, therefore, very great need for calm deliberateness. It would be so easy to allow the pendulum of one's being to overswing to either extreme. Extreme ecstasy, depression, irritability, indifference to outer things, absorption in the inner—all these and other extremes would not be at all difficult to reach, so surging are the forces playing through me. I must use my new powers with great vigour, yet with great restraint. I must take life easily, yet strenuously. Myself a whirlpool of force, I must remain a great centre of peace. I must needs live in the midst of storms, for I belong to storms, being of the band of pioneers. And as one grows, the seaworthiness of one's ship is tested in the alternations of calm and hurricane. We must be seaworthy, built of storm-proof spiritual substance, which accepts alike the gentle pressure of the unruffled sea and the furious beatings of stormlashed waves. I am reminded of Rudyard Kipling:

> When, with the gale at her heel, the barque lies down and recovers—
> Rolling through forty degrees, combing the stars with her tops,

What says the man at the wheel, holding her straight as she hovers
On the summits of wind-screening seas, steadying her as she drops ?
Behind him the blasts without check from the Pole to the Tropic pursue him,
Heaving up, heaping high, slamming home, the surges he must not regard :
Beneath him the crazy wet deck, and all Ocean on end to undo him ;
Above him one desperate sail, thrice-reefed but still buckling the yard !

Under his hand fleet the spokes and return, to be held or set free again ;
And she bows and makes shift to obey their behest, till the master-wave comes
And her gunwale goes under in thunder and smoke, and she chokes in the trough of the sea again—
Ere she can lift and make way to its crest ; and he, as he nurses her, hums !

These have so utterly mastered their work that they work without thinking ;
Holding three-fifths of their brain in reserve for whatever betide.

I have written that I have seemed to absorb Nirvana more than I seem to have been absorbed. I have just had an interesting experience indicating the truth of this, and suggesting either that there are early tests in

connection with Nirvanic consciousness, or that, after a certain realization of its glories, a choice is offered between remaining in them for an indefinite period, as one is entitled, and apparently renouncing them.

The experience must be related more or less in the symbolic form in which it came through to the physical brain. Evening after evening I have shaken myself free from the shackles of the lower bodies and I have roamed in splendid regions, climbing from peak to peak of consciousness, standing on great summits of Buddhic and Nirvanic bliss. Morning after morning I return from these cherished pilgrimages and assume again the vestures of what now seems to be a prison-life. Plunge again and again I must into these shadow-worlds, groping my way about, amidst confusion and clashing sounds of discord and of strife. Great is the strain of continual readjustment, and of the constant contrast between the Peace above and the War beneath. Are there no prospects of release? May I not let the lower worlds go? Have I not done with them? If I may leave them for the time, may I not leave them for all time? True, I am not unhappy, for there is work to do, and the Wardens of the Gates of the lower worlds are kindly. But at times

I long for Nirvana unbroken by these constant descents into what seem to be the dungeons of life. I seem so terribly shut off from the wonders I know in the higher worlds, the glorious worlds within, with a sunshine and freedom in such vivid contrast with the darkness and restriction of these lower spheres.

I am resigned, of course, more than resigned, eager, keen, enthusiastic in my duties in these dungeon places . . . and yet . . . I cannot forget what I have known and have sought feebly to describe to you. And because I cannot forget, I sometimes long the more. It may be a weakness, but if you knew what I knew, if you had been where I have been, you, too, might find the weakness excusable, or at least understandable. So, now and then, only now and then, enters the thought: Can I not quit these prison-worlds? Is not final release now possible?

Can I not escape my prison? Is release impossible? I would be finally free as all in Nirvana are free. I would for ever bask in the eternal sunshine in which they bathe. I too would for ever wander in that Elysian region, growing and yet so indescribably at rest, so free from all the irksomeness of prison life and discipline. As I thus yearn, suddenly the way

of escape opens. From without a whisper comes: "Be it as you will. A friend will open to you for the last time your prison gates. Enter into freedom and return no more." And as I realize the wonderful possibility, there seems to come upon me the sense of a great expectancy without, of a great welcome waiting for me as I cast off for the last time my—"prison fetters" is the word that comes—and yet, looking back, I see that these fetters are in reality more vows than fetters, so I almost feel constrained to write prison-vows rather than prison-fetters. But at the time I do not think of them as vows. They seem fetters, and I am impatient to be rid of them. I resolve I will be free, and as I so resolve the barriers fall away, and I find myself issuing forth again into the indescribable glories of unutterable freedom. How beautiful is the welcome of all things to me! How merged in them all I feel—one with all things, one with the myriad happinesses of the myriad lives around me, one with their myriad ecstasies, one with their myriad swayings in utter bliss to those Divine harmonies with which the very air is vocal. I am one with this stupendous Symphony, and add my own ecstasy of gorgeous being to those other

ecstasies which seem to ascend like incense to the very throne of God Himself.

I have entered Eternity. The past is for ever behind me. I am delightfully lost in the rapture of pure being. I *am*. And in these two words is a fathomless, limitless ocean of bliss supreme. But stay! What is this that I hear? What sounds are these that enter into my joy? Can it be—yes, it is—the call of my prison-worlds. But what have I now to do with my prison-worlds? They are behind me, and never need I return to them again. As I realize that I *am* free, so gloriously free, I feel how wonderful it is to know my safety in the power of this freedom. No power from prison-world can draw me back, for the power of my freedom transcends all other power below. For a moment again I lose myself in rhythmic ecstasy, and then—what is this strange thing which has come upon me? Am I dissatisfied with such a freedom? Am I, it seems impossible, beginning to *want* to return? It is true. Across the infinite spaces I have placed between myself and the far-off prison-worlds, come to me the cries of those whom prison-fetters still are binding. Can I honourably ignore them? Yes; and yet I cannot ignore them. Let this freedom, this ecstasy, go. I will have none of it while

prison-worlds still call—prison-worlds of every kingdom, prison-worlds of the worlds, of systems, of universes. And as I thus resolve, I find myself apparently turning away from my bliss, and all Nature round me watches my return in solemn stillness, and, I must add for truth's sake though I shrink from writing the words, almost as if in homage.

Back, back, I go, and at last I am at the doors of that prison-world I left so recently, but which seems an eternity away from me. The doors open. I enter. And as I enter, it is as if I heard: "You went to your freedom as was your right, for you have won it. The call of freedom came, and your ears were ready to hear, for you had fulfilled many of those vows the Monad made in the beginning of time, and in their fulfilment their fetters must needs drop away. Yet for many of your comrades from long ago the fetters still remain; and you have done well to heed the cry which came to you across the empty spaces. No bliss, however rapturous, must ever dull the ear to the cry of suffering and need; rather must it make the ear more sensitive, and the feet more speedy to succour."

And so I find myself back in the old routine of prison-life, and am content, for I am needed

where I am. But what is this change which has come about? Surely I am not still in prison? Is there a mistake? Have I left the cry unheeded? I look around me. The age-old prison-world is round me. Yet *I* am different. I have not returned alone. Something glorious has returned with me, and in its magic the imprisonment seems no imprisonment. It is imprisonment, and yet it is not. Slowly upon me dawns the fact that while the form is there, the life has become free. I dwell a free man in the form. No longer am I bound upon it. No longer need I return to it life after life its slave, though I may return its master. Form has become the servant of my life. Another miracle of transubstantiation, for within the forms freedom has been substituted for necessity. Have I not brought Nirvana back with Me? Have not the swaying ecstasies of Divinity-attuned rhythm entered into my very being, thus abiding with me even in the prison-worlds? All I thought I must leave is with me for ever. There is no loss in renunciation, only gain. There is no loss in sacrifice, only gain. And this gain is the supreme gain of gains—the gain of added Unity, and of the Love, the Wisdom and the Power which are its threefold aspect.

As I wake back in this prison-world, these words ring through me: "Take with you into your old home the gifts of the new. Take Nirvana with you as you have experienced it, and live in it in as deep fulfilment within all prison-worlds as you have lived in it in so great an ecstasy without. Know that there is no Nirvana from which to return, you have but to realize Nirvana where you are, for it is everywhere and always. Nirvana is no place, but a Truth—the glorious Reality in the Unreal, the great Eternal in all Time, the mighty Life in every form. Nirvana is the birthright and inheritance of all. Having entered into it yourself, inspire others to seek it by becoming a living reflection of its splendid Peace."

"Creation's Lord we give Thee thanks
That this Thy world is incomplete;
That battle calls our marshalled ranks,
That *work* awaits our hands and feet."

ENVOI

If he shall day by day dwell merciful,
Holy and just and kind and true ; and rend
Desire from where it clings with bleeding roots,
Till love of life have end :

He—dying—leaveth as the sum of him
A life-count closed, whose ills are dead and quit,
Whose good is quick and mighty, far and near,
So that fruits follow it.

No need hath such to live as ye name life ;
That which began in him when he began
Is finished : he hath wrought the purpose through
Of what did make him Man.

Never shall yearnings torture him, nor sins
Stain him, nor ache of earthly joys and woes
Invade his safe eternal peace ; nor deaths
And lives recur. He goes

Unto Nirvâna. He is one with Life,
Yet lives not. He is blest, ceasing to be.
OM, MANI PADME, OM ! The dewdrop slips
Into the shining sea !

The Light of Asia.

APPENDIX A

I. A NOTE BY DR. BESANT ON NIRVANA

FROM AN ADDRESS TO THE BRAHMAVIDYA ASHRAMA ON "PHILOSOPHY: OR GOD MANIFESTING AS UNDERSTANDING"

AND this leads me to say one word which, I think, you will have to keep as a steady thought right through, in all the questions that you meet in the various philosophies as to the meaning of "absorption," the Nirvana of the Buddhist, and the various ideas of Moksha, the true Nirvana of the Hindu. In all of these, if you wish to have the nearest approach to the truth that human limited intelligence and consciousness can gain, you must not think of what is called the drop merging in the ocean, that is, of the drop disappearing, which is the idea that the western student of eastern Philosophy usually adopts. What you have to think of (though it seems a contradiction) is the drop expanding into the ocean, and still keeping its own centre. It would not be much use building up individuality if, at the end, all was to be thrown away, and the individual was to be the same on

returning to "the bosom of the Father," as when he came from it. That is not the view which comes from an increasing knowledge of the expansions of consciousness, which is, after all, all that we have to guide us in our own experience. If you take the consciousness of the Higher Ego, you have a very strongly marked Individuality, a very distinct separating body—using that word for a kind of permanent enclosure of matter in which resides a certain stage of consciousness, which is essentially the I developing its I-ness, intensifying that sense of the I, by contrast with the universe around, in which the I does not find that its own consciousness is working. He is looking at it from outside, not from within it; and so he feels intensely the sharp separation between the I and the Not-I. But when the I-ness drops his causal body, his material from the higher mental plane, and passes on into the Buddhic, there is an immense expansion of consciousness, but there is no loss of that centre; he expands so as to include any of the consciousnesses which are acting on that plane. In a sense, he becomes all of them, and yet he never loses the sense of his own centre. He identifies himself with another with a closeness of identity that we know nothing of below that plane. But still there is the subtle memory of past experiences which gives it a little different hue, or colour, or fragrance, or whatever delicate word you can use to symbolise an existence which is almost impalpable and yet that remains, colouring, as it were, the Buddhic consciousness. There is that tremendous expansion;

and if, when you are studying the various philosophies, you keep that in mind, you will find every now and then a phrase which becomes intelligible when you have that thought in your mind. In Plotinus, you will find a wonderful description of Buddhic consciousness, in which he speaks of the Star which is itself and all the other Stars, as the striking fact of what we should now call the Buddhic body—or rather, the Buddhic sheath, to make a distinction between the enclosure and the appropriation of matter which does not separate. The Buddhic sheath is a radiating Star, not an enclosure. If you see a person in the Buddhic body on the Buddhic plane, you do not see an enclosure; you see a Star radiating out in all directions, whose rays pierce your consciousness so that you feel it to be a part of yourself, and yet not quite. It is almost impossible, except by a series of contradictions, to describe states of consciousness to which our language does not adapt itself. Of course, in Samskrit, you get an enormously more developed form of language, from the philosophical standpoint, than in English; yet in trying to make people understand, you must use a language that they will understand, the Samskrit is known by comparatively few people in the West. We are rather trying to eliminate the Samskrit terms without loss of accuracy. The experience of the Buddhic plane is not translatable into words down here but you do get indications of it, and they are generally called (when people read of them with no realisation of what they mean) "obscure,"

"vague," "indeterminate," etc. But it is quite clear, and not vague to anyone who touches it. It is one of the great facts of consciousness that you can never understand a stage which you have not reached. You cannot understand consciousness by looking at it from outside. I was answering a letter yesterday in which there was the question: "Why did God make the universe?" I suggested that there were many possible reasons, but that a kitten cannot understand why a man spends his time reading a book instead of running after a leaf on the ground, because the consciousness of the kitten is not developed enough to read a book; and we are all nearer to the kitten than to Ishvara in one sense, in our comprehension of His nature. It is quite true that

Closer is He than breathing
Nearer than hands and feet;

but you have to stretch your consciousness to accept contradictions.

On the other hand, when the consciousness begins to dawn, as it has to dawn, through the help of some one greater than yourself (otherwise it would shatter you), when, enveloped in the consciousness of another, you may touch the next plane, then the sense of absolute unity comes upon you, and you may say that the difference does disappear, but it disappears by expansion and not by extinguishment. That is why I said that, if you would think of the drop expanding into the ocean and sharing the consciousness of the ocean, you would have a truer idea of Nirvana, which so

many western writers call annihilation, though it is the fulness of Life.

I said the consciousness would be shattered. If you think for a moment of films of matter, however fine they may be, you will find that they have a certain limit of vibration, and that they can answer to and reproduce certain other limits of vibration. You also find that, if you take a very much more rapid rate of vibration, you break the enclosure, shatter it to pieces. That is true of all aggregations of matter, so far as we know them. There is a limit beyond which they cannot respond, and then they are simply shattered. That would be the effect if you were suddenly to find yourselves on the Nirvanic plane, if not prepared for it. You would simply have to burst, like a bubble vanishing. It is a very long job to build it again, the film of the bubble. Therefore people are prevented from going into it, unless it may happen that persons may be taken into it, to show them certain occurrences, certain truths, and then they are shielded, just as a diving-dress is given to the man who goes into water. Protective sheaths are possible all the way up.

There is, in the Buddhist Philosophy, a wonderful sentence of the Lord Gautama Buddha, where He is striving to indicate in human language something that would be intelligible about the condition of Nirvana. You find it in the Chinese translation of the Dhammapada, and the Chinese edition has been translated into English in the series of books known as "Trubner's Series". He puts it there

that, unless there was Nirvana, there could be nothing; and He uses various phrases in order to indicate what He means, taking the uncreated and then connecting with it the created; taking the real and then connecting with it the unreal. He sums it up by saying that Nirvana is; and that if it were not, naught else could be. That is an attempt (if one may call it so with all reverence) to say what cannot be said. It implies that unless there existed the Uncreated, the Invisible and the Real, we could not have a universe at all. You have there, then, the indication that Nirvana is a plenum, not a void. That idea should be fundamentally fixed in your mind, in your study of every great system of Philosophy. So often the expressions used may seem to indicate a void. Hence the western idea of annihilation. If you think of it as fulness, you will realise that the consciousness expands more and more, without losing utterly the sense of identity; if you could think of a centre of a circle without a circumference, you would glimpse the truth.

II. FROM "THE MASTERS AND THE PATH"

BY THE RIGHT REV. C. W. LEADBEATER

FOR the Arhat henceforth the consciousness of the buddhic plane is his while still in the physical body, and when he leaves that body in sleep or

trance, he passes at once into the unutterable glory of the nirvanic plane. At his Initiation he must have at least one glimpse of that nirvanic consciousness, just as at the First Initiation there must be a momentary experience of the buddhic, and now his daily effort will be to reach further and further up into the nirvanic plane. It is a task of prodigious difficulty, but gradually he will find himself able to work upwards into that ineffable splendour.

The entry into it is utterly bewildering, and it brings as its first sensation an intense vividness of life, surprising even to him who is familiar with the buddhic plane. This surprise has been his before, though in a lesser measure, whenever he mounted for the first time from one plane to another. Even when we rise first in full and clear consciousness from the physical plane to the astral, we find the new life to be so much wider than any that we have hitherto known that we exclaim: "I thought I knew what life was, but I have never known before!" When we pass into the mental plane, we find the same feeling redoubled; the astral was wonderful, but it was nothing to the mental world. When we pass into the higher mental plane, again we have the same experience. At every step the same surprise comes over again, and no thought beforehand can prepare one for it, because it is always far more stupendous than anything that we can imagine, and life on all those higher planes is an intensity of bliss for which no words exist.

European Orientalists have translated nirvana as annihilation, because the word means "blown out," as the light of a candle is extinguished by a breath. Nothing could be a more complete antithesis of the truth. Certainly it is the annihilation of all that down here we know as man, because there he is no longer man, but God in man, a God among other Gods, though less than They.

Try to imagine the whole universe filled with and consisting of an immense torrent of living light, the whole moving, moving onward, without relativity, a restless onward sweep of a vast sea of light, light with a purpose, if that is comprehensible, tremendously concentrated, but absolutely without strain or effort—words fail. At first we feel nothing but the bliss of it, and see nothing but the intensity of the light; but gradually we begin to realise that even in this dazzling brightness there are brighter spots (nuclei, as it were) through which the light obtains a new quality that enables it to become perceptible on lower planes, whose inhabitants without this aid would be altogether beneath the possibility of sensing its effulgence. Then by degrees we begin to realise that these subsidiary suns are the Great Ones, the Planetary Spirits, Great Angels, Karmic Deities, Dhyan Chohans, Buddhas, Christs and Masters, and many others who are to us not even names, and that through Them the light and life are flowing down to the lower planes.

Little by little, as we become more accustomed to this marvellous reality, we begin to see that

we are one with Them, though far below the summit of Their splendour, part of the One that dwells somehow in Them all, and also in every point of space between; and that we ourselves are also a focus, and through us at our much lower level the light and life are flowing to those who are still further away (not from it, for all are part of it and there is nothing else anywhere, but) from the realisation of it, the comprehension and experience of it.

Madame Blavatsky often spoke of that consciousness as having its centre everywhere and its circumference nowhere; a profoundly suggestive sentence, attributed variously to Pascal, Cardinal de Cusa and the *Zohar*, but belonging by right to the Books of Hermes. Far indeed from annihilation is such consciousness; the Initiate reaching it has not in the least lost the sense that he is himself; his memory is perfectly continuous; he is the same man, yet all this as well, and now indeed he can say: "I am I," knowing what "I" really means. It may sound strange, but it is true. No words that we can use can give even the least idea of such an experience as that, for all with which our minds are acquainted has long ago disappeared before that level is attained. There is, of course, even at that level, a sheath of some sort for the Spirit, impossible to describe for in one sense it seems as though it were an atom and yet in another it seems to be the whole plane. The man feels as if he were everywhere, but could focus anywhere within himself, and

wherever for a moment the outpouring of force diminishes, that is for him a body.

The man who has once realised that marvellous unity can never forget it, can never be quite as he was before; for however deeply he may veil himself in lower vehicles in order to help and save others, however closely he may be bound to the cross of matter, cribbed, cabined and confined, he can never forget that his eyes have seen the King in His Beauty, that he has beheld the land which is very far off—very far off, yet very near, within us all the time if we could only see it, because to reach nirvana we need not go away to some far-distant heaven, but only open our consciousness to its glory. As the Lord Buddha said long ago: "Do not complain and cry and pray, but open your eyes and see; for the light is all about you, and it is so wonderful, so beautiful, so far beyond anything that men have ever dreamed of or prayed for, and it is for ever and for ever."

APPENDIX B

AN EXTRACT FROM "THE ANCIENT WISDOM"

By Annie Besant

THE fifth plane, the Nirvanic, is the plane of the highest human aspect of the God within us, and this aspect is named by Theosophists, Atma or the Self. It is the plane of pure existence, of divine powers in their fullest manifestation in our fivefold universe—what lies beyond on the sixth and seventh planes is hidden in the unimaginable light of God. This Atmic, or Nirvanic, consciousness, the consciousness belonging to life on the fifth plane, is the consciousness attained by those lofty Ones, the first fruits of humanity, who have already completed the cycle of human evolution, and who are called Masters. They have solved in Themselves the problem of uniting the essence of individuality with non-separateness, and live, immortal Intelligences, perfect in wisdom, in bliss, in power.

When the human Monad comes forth from the Logos, it is as though from the luminous ocean of Atma a tiny thread of light was separated off from the rest by a film of Buddhic matter, and from this

hung a spark which becomes enclosed in an egg-like casing of matter belonging to the formless levels of the mental plane. "The spark hangs from the flame by the finest thread of Fohat." As evolution proceeds, this luminous egg grows larger and more opalescent, and the tiny thread becomes a wider and wider channel through which more and more of the Atmic life pours down. Finally, they merge—the third with the second, and the twain with the first, as flame merges with flame and no separation can be seen.

The evolution on the fourth and fifth planes belongs to a future period of our race, but those who choose the harder path of swifter progress may tread it even now, as will be explained later. On that path the bliss-body is quickly evolved, and a man begins to enjoy the consciousness of that loftier region, and knows the bliss which comes from the absence of separative barriers, the wisdom which flows in when the limits of the intellect are transcended. Then is the wheel escaped from, which binds the soul in the lower worlds, and then is the first foretaste of the liberty which is found perfected on the Nirvanic plane.

The Nirvanic consciousness is the antithesis of annihilation; it is existence raised to a vividness and intensity inconceivable to those who know only the life of the senses and the mind. As the farthing rushlight to the splendour of the sun at noon, so is the earth-bound consciousness to the Nirvanic, and to regard it as annihilation because the limits of the earthly consciousness have

vanished, is as though a man, knowing only the rushlight, should say that light could not exist without a wick immersed in tallow. That Nirvana IS has been borne witness to in the past in the Scriptures of the world by Those who enjoy it and live its glorious life, and is still borne witness to by others of our race who have climbed that lofty ladder of perfected humanity, and who remain in touch with earth that the feet of our ascending race may mount its rungs unfalteringly.

In Nirvana dwell the mighty Beings who accomplished Their own human evolution in past universes, and who came forth with the Logos when He manifested Himself to bring this universe into existence. They are His ministers in the administration of the worlds, the perfect agents of His will. The Lords of all the Hierarchies of the Gods and lower ministrants that we have seen working on the lower planes have here Their abiding-place, for Nirvana is the heart of the universe, whence all its life-currents proceed. Hence the Great Breath comes forth, the life of all, and thither it is indrawn when the universe has reached its term. There is the Beatific Vision for which mystics long, there the unveiled Glory, the Supreme Goal.

APPENDIX C

AN EXTRACT FROM "THE WISDOM OF THE ARYAS"

BY ANANDA M, A BUDDHIST MONK

LASTLY, mention has been made, during this and other essays of this series, of Nirvana, that Goal of Life towards which the Buddhist aspires, and unto which, the Master taught us, all life is surely tending; and it will be fitting if the whole series should close with some attempt to set forth the meaning Buddhists attach to that term. The literal meaning of the word is simply *blown out* —extinguished as is the flame of a lamp when it has been blown out; but you who have so far followed what has been said concerning it will understand how great has been the error of those who have expounded it as simply tantamount to sheer annihilation. Annihilation it is indeed in one sense—the annihilation of Desire, of Passion, of Self-delusion. But when we come to try to expound its meaning in terms other than negative, we are met with an insurmountable difficulty; that, namely, all our positive definitions must necessarily be in terms of the life we know, in terms of human

thought; and here we speak of That which is *Beyond* all Life, the very Goal towards which all Life is tending.

Perhaps the best physical analogy (it may, indeed, be something deeper than a mere analogy) to the Buddhist concept of the whole life-process may be drawn from that new science of this present century, which has so vividly illumined many another erstwhile darkened chamber of our human minds—the science of radio-activity. For that science tells us how certain of the elementary atoms are steadily changing into other atoms; losing, in the act of it, some portion of their mass, which appears in the form of an immense—an incredibly vast—outpouring of energy. Now the Buddhist view of the universe at large is exactly parallel; it teaches that life—using the term here in its restricted sense as the highest sort of life—consists of a vast number of entities; passing, indeed, from one state of life into another; but still, so far as what we may term *spiritual descent* is concerned, each the same bundle of life-forces in all these manifold manifestations. From time to time a given individual finds—whether by his own unaided effort, or, more frequently by far, as the result of following the Teaching of a Buddha—a spiritual Sun of this mental, conscious world—that inner, hidden mental Path which leads out of Life's dreaming to the Truth which lies beyond. And, just as the radio-active atom, in disintegrating, ceases, so far at least as part of it is concerned, to be matter at all; becomes, as it were transmuted

into force, thus adding to the heat or other form of energy in the material universe; so does a part, at least, of what had been a human being, pass into a different condition—or, to speak more correctly, pass beyond conditioning altogether, even as part of the physical atom passes into a non-material energy.

There are even closer parallelisms between the two concepts—when we come to examine these in detail—facts relating to the *grouping* of the transition;—of man to Arhatship or of atom to disintegration,—into very definite stages; and yet others relating to the time-law according to which the atomic disintegration occurs. These details, however, we must leave aside. Here it can only be said that to the instructed Buddhist, Nirvana stands for the Ultimate, the Beyond, and the Goal of Life—a State so utterly different from this conditioned, ever-changing being of the Self-dream that we know as to lie not only quite Beyond all naming and describing; but far past even Thought itself.

And yet—and herein lies the wonder and the greatness of this Wisdom of the Aryas, won by the Greatest of the Aryans for the enfranchisement of man from all his self-wrought bondages—this Glory utterly beyond all grasp of thought, this Peace that is the very purpose of all strife-involving being, lies nearer to us than our nearest consciousness; even as, to him who rightly understands, it is dearer than the dearest hope that we can frame. Past all the glory of the moon and sun, still infinitely far

above the starry heights of conscious being sublimated to its ultimate ; beyond the infinite abysses of that all-embracing Æther wherein these universes have their bourneless home ;—illimitably far remote above the utmost altitudes where Thought, with vainly-beating wings, falls like some lost bird that had aspired till the thin air no longer could support it;—*still* it dwells higher, higher than the very thought we now are thinking, higher than the consciousness that, for the transitory moment, is what truly can be termed ourselves.

Not through successive subtilisations of the false idea of Selfhood, then ; not through those higher States of Being which we have spoken of as the successive *Jhanas*—the States of Ecstasy—lies the Ancient Way the Teacher found ; but in the very humblest, simplest, and most intimate of all directions that the heart of man can turn and travel in. Just as the Wisdom-Being turned His back on all the glories of the world ; on all false Mara's promise of world-grasping domination ; on all the complex grandeurs of His court-life to become a beggar—humblest and lowliest of human creatures ; living in the crudest, simplest, most immediate way—just as He wrought that Great Renunciation only that He might find the Way that *all* might follow to the Peace—so does the portal of the Path stand wide for all of us just only when—though it be but for a moment—*we forget our Self ; and live, aspire and work for Life at large.* If we should draw, as on a chart, a diagram of Life in all its countless renderings, setting here but the dim germ-consciousness

of the mineral; then the dawn of organised life in the world of flowers and plants; then the animal; then the human and self-conscious life we know; and yet beyond these those loftier altitudes of Being attained through the High Ecstasies, the *Jhanas*; the worlds of the Angels and the Gods; and, yet beyond these, the highest, holiest State whereof the Saints and Sages of old time have told —the Bodiless, Formless Ones in their highest Heaven of Pure Ideation; then, *nowhere in all that chart;* and nowhere beyond it in its own plane, could we extend it even to infinity—would lie the place that might be assigned to the abode, the dwelling of Nirvana; and—so far as we can state in words at all that all-pervading intimacy of it—that direction lies, for our own conscious life, *where* there is no more Self; just as in our analogy its Abode would be *where there is no more plane* of that conditioned chart.

And, indeed, we are told in our Teaching that it is just this very human life we now are living in which alone that high Path which leads to it may be *entered*; though it may be *completed* (where it takes more than one life, as is said to be most usual) in the higher Heavenly Realms. It is explained that in the states of life below the human —in the animal world, the world of ghosts, and so forth—there is ever too much of suffering, too much of haunting fear for Self, for the being to be able to take what we have seen is an essential step, namely, the Right Concentration of the mind. Otherwise put, there is too little *mind*, too dim a

consciousness, in those lowly states of life for concentration to be possible. Whilst on the other hand, we learn, there in the Heavenly Realms beyond the human state, so vast is the extension of consciousness in both space and time that a being born into such a life cannot grasp the truth of Suffering; *his own* life is so merged in ecstasy, whether of sense or of the Pure Intelligence, that he cannot understand how Suffering, how Transiency, can be true; and—because infinitely subtler—his own conception of the Self within him is so far more potent and more real-seeming that he cannot grasp that in that utter-real-seeming Selfhood naught but Delusion dwells.

So it is *here* and *now*—not in some imagined future or in some state indefinitely higher than the human life—that, for the Buddhist, lies the Great Opportunity; here in this human life which sometimes seems so petty and so mean and sordid; yet which even the high and holy Gods might envy, could they but understand!

This little human life—so short, so, empty-seeming of high hopefulness—is yet the Gate of Opportunity for all the myriad beings in all Life's countless realms; the very portal of the Path to Liberation and to Peace! So taught the Greatest of the genius-gifted Aryan Race—He whom we love to term the Wisest, and, above all, the Most Compassionate of men. Can you wonder that we smile, then, when those who have not understood His Teaching speak of it as a gloomy pessimism? Can you wonder that we love and reverence Him,

adoring the very memory of that great Life as men of other creeds adore their holiest Gods?

Many there are, here in these western lands to-day, to whom this old-time Wisdom of the Aryas comes—despite all the insularity of their upbringing—with a strange stirring of the deeps of consciousness;—as if in answer to some but half-remembered Voice, echoing through the mind's dim caverns out of the gulf of immemorial years. Such, we would say, have heard and have a little understood its Message in old lives foregone; have caught, through it, some vision of the Truth that reigns behind this darkling mystery of life;—even it may be, have drawn nigh, through it, to that high Portal of the Path that leads to Liberation. That this is so we know from long experience; and, indeed, once one admits and understands the operation of the Law of Life, of Karma, it becomes clear that some such a condition must prevail. Forever the Wheel of Life in its unceasing movement brings each creature new conditionings; yet these are ever sequent in the ultimate; where the old life breaks off, there the new birth reintegrates its bygone state. So, since Aryan India in its great Buddhist phase stood in the forefront of the human progress then extant, we should expect that many who formed part of that great civilisation would at this time, when the centre of progress and of civilisation has shifted to the west, take birth in western lands.

For such these essays have been written—ever in the hope that, despite their imperfections,

sufficient of the spirit of Buddhism may yet shine through them to stir the sleeping memories of life once more. Through eighty generations of mankind; through all the changing circumstances of time and racial development, that spirit, that essence of the Teaching of the Greatest of Humanity, has been passed on from heart to living heart,—all-conquering. And surely the western world, amidst this present darkness of its religious life, may well find in this ancient Truth some answer to its deepest problems; some solace for the sorrows and the nescience of life?

Selfless to live and selfless die—seeking for no reward, but only service of the greater life; hoping for no high heaven, for no æonian bliss, but only to grow selfless every day—such is the lesson that pervades alike the Master's life, the Master's Teaching—thereby may Peace come to all life at last!

APPENDIX D

I. THE STAFF

FROM "MAN: WHENCE, HOW AND WHITHER"

BY ANNIE BESANT AND C. W. LEADBEATER

WHEN the Human Kingdom is traversed, and man stands on the threshold of His superhuman life, a liberated Spirit, seven paths open before Him for His choosing: He may enter into the blissful omniscience and omnipotence of Nirvana, with activities far beyond our knowing, to become, perchance, in some future world an Avatara, or divine Incarnation; this is sometimes called "taking the Dharmakaya vesture". He may enter on the "Spiritual Period"—a phrase covering unknown meanings, among them probably that of "taking the Sambhogakaya vesture". He may become part of that treasure-house of spiritual forces on which the Agents of the Logos draw for Their work, "taking the Nirmanakaya vesture". He may remain a member of the Occult Hierarchy which rules and guards the world in which He has reached perfection. He may pass on to the next Chain, to aid in building up its forms. He may

enter the splendid Angel or Deva Evolution. He may give Himself to the immediate service of the Logos, to be used by Him in any part of the Solar System, His Servant and Messenger, who lives but to carry out His will and do His work over the whole of the system which He rules. As a General has his staff, the members of which carry his messages to any part of the field, so are These the Staff of Him who commands all, "Ministers of His that do His pleasure". This seems to be considered a very hard Path, perhaps the greatest sacrifice open to the Adept, and is therefore regarded as carrying with it great distinction. A member of the General Staff has no physical body, but makes one for Himself by Kriyashakti—the "power to make"—of the matter of the globe to which He is sent. The Staff contains Beings at very different levels, from that of Arhatship upwards.

II. THE SERVERS

I REFER my readers to the exhaustive account given of these workers in *The Lives of Alcyone* by Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater, in the "Foreword". This "Foreword" may also be found in *The Theosophist*, September, 1913.

APPENDIX E

THE AUSTRALIAN SECTION: A VISION

BY G. S. ARUNDALE

LET us look for a while into the future of our Australian Section. I see the Section enormously more influential, not so much because of its increased membership, but because of the far greater extent to which it practises the Theosophy which beforehand it had more preached than practised.

I see the Section as the real heart of Australia—the link between Australia and Those who are the Heart of the world. I see that the majority of the members recognise this fact, and dedicate themselves accordingly. I see the Section as a kind of smaller Nation within the Australian Nation. The Australian National standard is kept, is set, by members of the Australian Section of the Theosophical Society. In greater or less degree the people of Australia conform to this standard, which is finely maintained by the majority of the members, and is continually exercising, by its very existence, a pressure upon the people of Australia, so that conformity to it grows steadily though slowly.

I see membership of the Section becoming a privilege, a mark of respect, rather than a matter for ridicule or disapproval as it was in the middle of the twentieth century. People in the outside world do not always want to join the Society, for it involves very strenuous, though very joyous, living; but they recognise the valuable contribution members make to the National uplift. They also recognise the fact that members of the Society do not live for themselves, but for those around them, and that their opinions and activities are always constructive, never separative.

I see that the Section forms part of the heart of that great League of Nations which to-day we call the British Empire. The Empire evidently becomes a League of Nations, united not merely for the common good of its constituent parts, but equally, perhaps more, to help to ensure the peace and prosperity of the world. Each Section of the Society represents its own particular country in the smaller League of Nations, itself the heart of the larger League, which is the Society as a whole. Each Section, too, sets an example of perfect harmonisation with the interests of the whole of which it is a part. The League of Nations which we call the Empire thus becomes a unity which no individual divergence of ideals is able to break, for at the heart of the League is a Universal Brotherhood begun. The Theosophical Society is a world in itself, a living example to the larger world of the future which awaits it.

The greatest safeguard against wars, quarrels and all other kinds of disruptive forces is the Theosophical Society. The Society, in certain respects at all events, strongly influences public opinion, and becomes so well organised, so harmonious, that it inevitably exercises the power which order ever has over disorder. That against which the Society unitedly stands, the world finds it increasingly difficult to do.

How does this come about? Not by force. The Society does not believe in force, even if it had the force to wield, which it has not. But by compelling-example. The Society, every individual member, is living Theosophy, living it in the everyday things of life. Theosophists live differently. They live without fear. They live peacefully. They live far more happily. They live far more healthily.

They seem to have in great measure eradicated disease because they know how to live. First, they do not live **at the expense of others.** They do not live on the pain of others, whether human or sub-human. They eat pure things, and find deliciousness in grace, in purity and in simplicity, not in complexity and coarseness. Second, they live hygienically. Their clothes, their homes, all their arrangements for the care of the body, are designed to this end. And they have learned that hygienic living does not merely mean pure air, the right values of food, and so on; it means also artistic and rhythmic living, graceful living. This is equally indispensable.

I see, too, that the Theosophists of this period—it is not, perhaps, so very far off—have ceased to worry and to be anxious, have to a large extent done away with irritability. Anger and hatred have, of course, entirely disappeared. So have suspicion and distrust. The sexual problem has also been solved, partly by a clear understanding of sex and its divine purpose, partly by the recognition of marriage and maternity as wonderful Sacraments. The Theosophists of this period are deeply reverent while at the same time delightfully light-hearted.

I see the Lodges of to-day gradually becoming communities. They are communities at the time of which I write. Little by little, families congenial to each other have either built or taken houses close together on the outskirts of the towns, and community living begins, without the loss of individuality. More and more, that which can advantageously be done in common is done in common, with the result that living becomes cheaper and much more time becomes available for the larger work.

In some cases, a number of families live together in a house specially built for the purpose—a kind of monastery without any of the disadvantages or restrictions, and giving ample opportunity for individual development, as well as, within reason, for the satisfaction of individual idiosyncrasies. In other cases, there is a kind of village community, a group of houses or cottages, self-contained, a kind of Garden City on a small scale. I see that these

communities specially concern themselves with education and with amusements. I could write at length on the educational side, but it must suffice to say that the Theosophical education given in the times of which I write is extraordinarily practical, is far more by doing than by learning, enables the young people to understand the Laws of Life and how to use them, and certainly makes for a very great efficiency. These Theosophical young people are much more markedly different from other young people than those of to-day. Very practical, very thorough in everything, never satisfied unless they get to the root of things, always insisting on finding out things for themselves, deeply reverent of the Real, equally impatient of the unreal, of sham, of hypocrisy, of pretence, reliable, beautifully courteous to all, tender, understanding. It is obviously so beautiful to be young that those who are no longer young almost begin to be impatient for youth again. I can hear some of them saying: "Ah! well, in a short time I shall have a young body once more." Death thus comes to mean but exchange, the giving up of the old clothes for new. Young people in these later times are so very delightful. They make life so sparkling. Old people never feel "out of things," partly because the young share with them their bright lives, and partly because they have their own "things" to do, things appropriate to age, things only age can do, and which need to be done.

I thus see every Lodge and every Centre a community, or a number of communities. These

communities almost become places of pilgrimage for the people round. People gradually become attracted to the Science whose votaries are so obviously happy, and equally obviously " all there ". People see that these Theosophists are no mere talkers and dreamers, but are the best among the citizens, patriotic, loyal, and always ready both to help good causes and to fight bad ones. There are no weaklings, whether in body or in mind, among these Theosophists. Straight, clear, strenuous, efficient, healthy, they all of them are. Thus, as people see the effect of belief in brotherhood, in karma, in reincarnation, and so on, they begin to turn to these beliefs, very rightly holding that there must be something in theories which produce such results, and which for most of the Theosophists do not seem to be mere theories, but rather experienced facts. Theories which make better people need looking into. And the result is that by degrees vegetarianism, for example, becomes widespread, and in all spheres of life begins a great renaissance of Reality.

I see such beautiful libraries in these communities, so up-to-date, not so much with Theosophical literature, although each community has its full complement of standard Theosophical works, but with the latest works of outer world thinkers in religion, politics, philosophy, sociology, science, art, literature, education, etc. These communities are nothing if not thorough, and being in advance of the world in certain directions they take good care to be abreast of the world's most eminent

thinkers and workers in all departments. Wireless keeps them in constant touch with events all over the world, just as the world, as well as all Theosophical communities in every part of the world, receive wireless news from the principal Theosophical communities everywhere.

I must specially stress the beautiful colour and sound-music these communities have developed in wonderful degree, music far more subtle than that which the outer world has reached. I also notice the simplicity and dignity of the furnishing of the rooms, and the beautiful homage paid to greatness in the inspiring pictures of the world's great deeds and the world's great doers of them, as also pictures of places of great historic and spiritual interest.

The keynote of every community is service. All that is done is done to that end. Service is the dominant objective of all community activity. Every member of the community lives and grows in an atmosphere of joyous and efficient service. In all emergencies, National or local, Theosophists are active with trained capacity and tireless energy. They are the first people upon whom reliance is placed in all difficulties, for they know how to apply the healing balm of scientific brotherhood to all wounds in the body politic. In the outer world, for the most part, are the world's great scientists, poets, statesmen, philosophers, industrialists, but within the Theosophical Society are the world's great seers and prophets, and those who lead the way in the application of brotherhood to life in all its varied aspects. Thus does the

Theosophical Society become a golden chain of Brotherhood encircling and uniting the world.

Of course, all this is immensely hastened by the life of the Christ in the world. Many recognise Him. Some do not. But His example, and above all His immensely potent insistence on the Real, brushing aside conventionalities, conveniences, superstitions, shams, hypocrisies, though at first repellent to the many who had been living on all these, in many cases no doubt unconsciously, gradually commands the attention Truth ever ultimately compels when garbed in the Form of the world's great mirror of Truth—the Christ.

It is impossible for me to find words to express the marvellous benediction of the Christ's immediate Presence. Indeed does He revolutionise, but as He revolutionises He heals. From all that He touches drops away the unreal, and the world grows bright in the renewal of its youth. The dust of ages is swept away, the encrustations of centuries disappear, and life stands once more revealed in all its simplicity, in all its beauty, in all its power and purpose. How foolish are those who deny Him! How sad for them! Yet the time will come for them, too, to recognise a Saviour, for Saviours of the world will come again and again until none are left to deny, until all rejoice. Perchance we who hope to recognise Him in the near future have denied aforetime. Our turn has come to recognise—theirs perhaps not yet.

Do you wonder, with so glorious a vision before my eyes, that I become eager for the vision to

descend into the outer world? I know it is on the threshold. I have written of the vision as it is when partly realised, but I know that its beginnings are now. I know that every member of our Society—for though I write of Australia, the vision is for all countries—should without delay begin to turn his eyes towards the Real. I know that every member should raise his anchor from the unreal and sail away into the East, the land of the Real.

How well it would be if even from now every member eagerly began to plan ways and means of entering more quickly into our Theosophic inheritance, if every member made up his mind to live quite definitely more unto brotherhood, less unto self! How well it would be if every member determined to make Theosophy a truly living force in his life, far more in the daily routine, in the daily toil, in the daily cares and troubles, even than in his utterances, so that his utterances are fortified by their harmonisation with his daily life! How wonderful it would be if we could live Theosophy as well as preach it! Many are trying to do this already, I know; but it needs to be done by us all, and far more fully. We must believe, really believe, in Theosophy, so that as time goes on it becomes impossible to live otherwise than Theosophically, so that we become Theosophists, not merely members of the Theosophical Society.

How well it would be if all over Australia—and everywhere else, too, of course—members, groups of members, groups of families, Centres, Lodges,

seriously began to discuss ways and means of making brotherhood more practical among themselves, discussed schemes of community living, concerted measures for doing as much together as possible, went into the possibilities of combining in certain activities to make living cheaper, to make leisure more enjoyable and purposeful, to pool individual resources in pursuit of common happiness and greater efficiency! Why cannot Lodges and Centres go into all these questions to see what can be done? At the least, why cannot certain families and friends combine to live much more together, to work much more together, to play much more together? Is it not time for us to hustle, and to make our nuclei of the Universal Brotherhood much more real than they are?

The result will be, because of the more brotherly living, a much more potent and effective brotherhood activity in the outer world. To set the Nation-house in order, or the world-house, or the town or city-house, we must set our Lodge or Centre-house in order, as well as our body-house, too, of course. We shall in this way become much more strenuous and efficient than before. We shall have much more time to participate in all kinds of brotherhood activity in the outer world. Though we may live on the outskirts of the town, and grow very self-contained, we shall not become in the least degree exclusive or aloof. On the contrary, the increased sense of brotherhood will compel us to regard our community life merely as a centre from

which we radiate our vitality to the farthest limits of our respective circumferences. We shall take part in all the life of our surroundings as we have never taken part in it before. We shall have our centres in our town or city, veritable hives of brotherhood industry, places of meeting, centres for organisation, for industrial, commercial political, educational, social and religious activities of all kinds. These centres will gradually be recognised as centres of truly practical idealism. We shall show the world how to live, how really to live, how to be full of life, of true life, in every sphere—in the home, in business, in the duties of citizenship, in leisure.

Let us begin, individually and in groups, to think about all these things **now**. Let us begin to think about them with definite intention to achieve them. Let us not think of them as unattainable. They **are** attainable. They are about to come. If we have the will, we must assuredly find the way. Difficulties? Of course. But as we encounter the difficulties, let us discover ways and means of overcoming them. Under no circumstances must we give up simply because we encounter difficulties and obstacles. These are things to be got **over**, or **under**, or **round**. In some cases, indeed, they may be imaginary, so that with a little light-heartedness and self-confidence we may go **through** them.

I make it a personal request that members of the Australian Section begin to discuss ways and means. I ask them to consider these things at members' meetings in a spirit of constructive

criticism, looking for the way to them. The way is there. The way for every Lodge and Centre is there. It only has to be sought persistently. Of course, it means an upsetting of conventional jog-trot living. But that is exactly what we have to do. Let every member impose this penance upon himself—not to throw cold water on the discussion or on any earnest endeavour to find the way. It is so easy to throw cold water, to find difficulties. Anyone can do this. It requires little intelligence, and is the way of the world, and so the line of most easy going, of least resistance, of least effort.

Let us find out the way how to achieve. It may take time. Achievement is not by any means possible all at once. **But I ask for the thin end of the wedge.** Will every Lodge, every Centre, every member, find the thin edge of the wedge, never mind how thin it is, place it in position and begin to hammer it home, however long the hammering may take? Every hammer-blow will bring us nearer to the Real, and deliver us from the shackles of the unreal.

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